

MATTHEWS, ROBERT HAROLD, D.M.A. Darius Milhaud's *Sacred Service*: A Historical, Textual, and Theoretical Analysis. (2011)  
Directed by Dr. Welborn E. Young. 86 pp.

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974) was a French composer whose prolific musical output includes a wide variety of genres: operas, ballets, film and radio scores, orchestral and choral works, solo vocal and instrumental works, and chamber music. *Grove Music Online* lists 44 works in Milhaud's choral oeuvre, many of which consist of multiple movements. They range from short a cappella pieces to major works with orchestral accompaniment. Milhaud set both sacred and secular texts from a variety of sources, including the Bible and famous writers such as Paul Claudel, Rainer Maria Rilke, Paul Verlaine, and Elie Wiesel.

Milhaud's choral works include a number of pieces inspired by his Jewish heritage. Outstanding among them is a piece that San Francisco's Temple Emanu-El commissioned him to write in 1947, the *Service sacré pour le samedi matin* (*Sacred Service for Sabbath Morning*). This work is a setting of the Saturday morning Jewish liturgy in Hebrew and English or French written for baritone solo, narrator, mixed chorus, and orchestra or organ and is approximately 55 minutes in length.

Milhaud's *Sacred Service* is a relatively unknown work in the standard western canon of choral literature. Three probable reasons for this lack of knowledge are the absence of scholarly inquiry into the choral music of Milhaud, unfamiliarity with the Jewish liturgy, and unfamiliarity with the Hebrew language. The purpose of this document was to provide a greater understanding of Milhaud's

*Sacred Service* in the context of the Jewish liturgy through a historical, textual, and theoretical analysis.

Chapter I includes the introduction and purpose of this document and discusses specific aspects of Milhaud's biography and musical style as related to the *Sacred Service*. The second chapter includes information on the commissioning, composition, and reception of this work. Chapter III is an explanation of the Reform Jewish liturgy and the text of the Sabbath Morning Service. The fourth chapter is a theoretical analysis of the *Sacred Service* focusing on form, melody, harmony, texture, and timbre. Chapter V contains a summarization of this document's findings and suggestions for future research. The appendices include a letter from Milhaud to Reuben Rinder, Cantor of Temple Emanu-El, and the reviews of the work's premier performance from the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *San Francisco Examiner*.

DARIUS MILHAUD'S *SACRED SERVICE*:  
A HISTORICAL, TEXTUAL, AND  
THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

by

Robert Harold Matthews

A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Faculty of The Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Musical Arts

Greensboro  
2011

Approved by

---

Committee Chair

To my parents,  
Harold and Marion Matthews  
and  
Joe and Linda Vaughn.



## APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the  
Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair

---

Welborn E. Young

Committee Members

---

Randy Kohlenberg

---

Carole Ott

---

Robert Wells

---

Date of Acceptance by Committee

---

Date of Final Oral Examination

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank the members of his dissertation committee for their support and encouragement throughout his program of study at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. This degree would not have been possible without the assistance of Dr. Welborn E. Young, Dr. Randy Kohlenberg, Dr. Carole Ott, and Dr. Robert Wells.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| LIST OF FIGURES .....   | vi   |
| CHAPTER   |      |
| I. THE HISTORICAL AND MUSICAL CONTEXT OF<br>MILHAUD'S <i>SACRED SERVICE</i> ..... | 1    |
| Introduction and Purpose .....  | 1    |
| Historical Context: Aspects of Milhaud's Life.....                                | 3    |
| Musical Context: Aspects of Milhaud's Musical Style.....                          | 8    |
| II. THE SEARCH FOR A JEWISH PALESTRINA .....                                      | 15   |
| III. THE REFORM LITURGY AND THE TEXT OF THE <i>SACRED SERVICE</i> .....           | 24   |
| IV. A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE <i>SACRED SERVICE</i> .....                     | 39   |
| Form.....   | 39   |
| Melody.....   | 47   |
| Harmony .....   | 54   |
| Texture and Timbre .....  | 64   |
| V. CONCLUSION .....   | 70   |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY .....  | 77   |
| APPENDIX A: CORRESPONDENCE .....  | 80   |
| APPENDIX B: REVIEWS .....   | 83   |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Figure 1. Comparison of the Sabbath Morning Service and<br>Milhaud's <i>Sacred Service</i> ..... | 28   |
| Figure 2. Table of Contents from Milhaud's <i>Sacred Service</i> .....                           | 37   |
| Figure 3. "Bénédiction," mm. 165-171 .....   | 40   |
| Figure 4. "Mi Khamokha," mm. 189-202 .....   | 42   |
| Figure 5. "Taking the scroll from the Ark," mm. 91-100.....                                      | 43   |
| Figure 6. "Taking the scroll from the Ark," mm. 152-167 .....                                    | 44   |
| Figure 7. "Returning the scroll to the Ark," mm. 243-247 .....                                   | 46   |
| Figure 8. "Kedushah," mm. 309-322.....   | 49   |
| Figure 9. "Adon Olam," mm. 103-110 .....   | 51   |
| Figure 10. "Tsur Yisrael," mm. 230-236 .....   | 53   |
| Figure 11. "Ma Tovv," mm. 1-16.....  | 55   |
| Figure 12. "Bénédiction," mm. 185-194.....   | 56   |
| Figure 13. "Universal prayer," mm. 65-74 .....   | 57   |
| Figure 14. "Mi Khamokha," mm. 180-188.....   | 58   |
| Figure 15. "Prayer and response," mm. 80-87 .....  | 60   |
| Figure 16. "Kedushah," mm. 338-346.....  | 61   |
| Figure 17. "Kedushah," mm. 450-458.....  | 62   |
| Figure 18. "Prayer and response," mm. 35-42 .....  | 63   |
| Figure 19. "Ma Tovv," mm. 17-24.....   | 65   |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Figure 20. “Ets ‘Hayim,” mm. 294-297 .....   | 65 |
| Figure 21. “Silent prayer and Yihyu leratson,” mm. 100-103 .....                                       | 66 |
| Figure 22. “Ma Tovv,” mm. 7-14.....  | 68 |
| Figure A1. Letter from Darius Milhaud to Ruben Rinder,<br>December 25, 1947.....                       | 82 |
| Figure B1. Alexander Fried’s review of the premier of<br>Milhaud’s <i>Sacred Service</i> .....         | 84 |
| Figure B2. Alfred Frankenstein’s review of the premier of<br>Milhaud’s <i>Sacred Service</i> .....     | 85 |
| Figure B3. Alexander Fried’s review of the premier of<br>Milhaud’s <i>Friday Evening Service</i> ..... | 86 |

## CHAPTER I

### THE HISTORICAL AND MUSICAL CONTEXT OF MILHAUD'S *SACRED SERVICE*

#### **Introduction and Purpose**

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974) was a prolific French composer whose musical output includes a wide variety of genres: operas, ballets, film and radio scores, orchestral and choral works, solo vocal and instrumental works, and chamber music. *Grove Music Online* lists 44 works in Milhaud's choral oeuvre, many of which consist of multiple movements. The works range from short a cappella pieces to major works with orchestral accompaniment. Milhaud set both sacred and secular texts from a variety of sources, including the Bible and famous writers such as Paul Claudel, Rainer Maria Rilke, Paul Verlaine, and Elie Wiesel.

Milhaud's choral compositions include a number of works inspired by his Jewish heritage. Outstanding among them is a work that San Francisco's Temple Emanu-El commissioned him to write in 1947, the *Service sacré pour le samedi matin* (*Sacred Service for Sabbath Morning*). This work is a setting of the Saturday morning Jewish liturgy in Hebrew and English or French written for baritone solo, narrator, mixed chorus, and orchestra or organ and is approximately 55 minutes in length.

Unlike the Catholic liturgy, settings of the Jewish liturgy are rare in the choral repertoire. One notable example, which preceded Milhaud's work, is Ernest Bloch's

(1880-1959) *Avodath Hakodesh* of 1934. Neil Levin, artistic director of the Milken Archive of Jewish Music, addressed the exceptional nature of Milhaud's work in his program notes that accompany a recent recording:

Even at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Milhaud's *Service Sacré* (for Sabbath Morning) is considered one of only two cases where the Hebrew liturgy of an entire prayer service formed the basis of a large-scale unified work of universal "high art" expression by a composer of international stature in the general classical music world.<sup>1</sup>

Milhaud's *Sacred Service* is a relatively unknown work in the standard western canon of choral literature. Three probable reasons for this lack of knowledge are the absence of scholarly inquiry into the choral music of Milhaud, unfamiliarity with the Jewish liturgy, and unfamiliarity with the Hebrew language. The purpose of this study was to provide a greater understanding of Milhaud's *Sacred Service* in the context of the Jewish liturgy through a historical, textual, and theoretical analysis.

Chapter I includes the introduction and purpose of this document and discusses specific aspects of Milhaud's biography and musical style as related to the *Sacred Service*. The second chapter includes information on the commissioning, composition, and reception of this work. Chapter III is an explanation of the Reform Jewish liturgy and the text of the Sabbath Morning Service. The fourth chapter is a theoretical analysis of the *Sacred Service* focusing on form, melody, harmony,

---

<sup>1</sup> Darius Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, orchestra and chorus dir. Gerard Schwartz, Naxos 8.559409 (CD), 2003, 8.

texture, and timbre. Chapter V contains a summarization of this document's findings and suggestions for future research. The appendices include a letter from Milhaud to Reuben Rinder, Cantor of Temple Emanu-El, and the reviews of the work's premier performance from the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *San Francisco Examiner*.

### **Historical Context: Aspects of Milhaud's Life**

A closer look at Milhaud's life and music places the *Sacred Service* in its appropriate context and offers insight into its historical and musical significance. Milhaud was born in 1892 in Marseilles, France to a Jewish family and grew up in Aix-en-Provence. The importance of Milhaud's Jewish heritage is apparent throughout his life; the first sentence of his autobiography, *My Happy Life*, makes this clear: "I am a Frenchman from Provence, and, by religion, a Jew."<sup>2</sup> Provence has traditionally been a center of French Judaism, and Milhaud's family has a long history there. His great-grandfather presented the inauguration speech at the founding of the Jewish Temple in Aix-en-Provence in 1840.

Milhaud was not a practicing Orthodox Jew, but he did take his faith seriously. In *Conversations with Madeleine Milhaud*, Milhaud's wife said that her husband was "profoundly" religious and possessed "a blind faith."<sup>3</sup> Madame Milhaud also stated that Milhaud's faith can be seen in his choral compositions: "If you

---

<sup>2</sup> Darius Milhaud, *My Happy Life*, trans. Donald Evans, George Hall, and Christopher Palmer (New York: Marion Boyars, 1995), 23.

<sup>3</sup> Roger Nichols, *Conversations with Madeleine Milhaud* (London: Faber and Faber, 1996), 96.



listen closely to his *Sacred Service*, I feel his humanity comes out, his relationship with his Creator. A lot of his works are like this, especially cantatas and choral pieces.”<sup>4</sup>

Several of Milhaud’s works prior to the *Sacred Service* draw inspiration from Judaism. The story of his opera, *Esther de Carpentras* (1925-27), written in collaboration with librettist Armand Lunel (1892-1977), is based around the tradition of dramatizing the Old Testament story of Esther during the Jewish holiday of Purim. Milhaud’s other Jewish-themed works from this period include *Poème juifs* for voice and piano (1916), *Psalm 136* for solo voices, men’s chorus, and orchestra (1918), *Psalm 129* for voice and orchestra (1919), *Psalm 126* for a cappella men’s chorus (1921), *Six chants populaires hébraïques* for voice and piano or orchestra (1925), *Deux hymnes ‘Hymne de Sion’* and *‘Israel est vivant’* for voice and piano (1925), *Prières journalières à l’usage des juifs du Comtat Venaissin* for voice and piano (1927), *Liturgie comtadine* for voice and piano or orchestra (1933), and *Cantate nuptiale* for voice and orchestra (1937).

The events surrounding World War II greatly affected Milhaud and his family. When Germany occupied France in 1940, the Nazi party created a wanted list of famous Jewish artists; Milhaud’s name was included on the list, and, as a result, he made the decision to immigrate to the United States. Milhaud accepted a position teaching composition at Mills College in Oakland, California, and he and his family

---

<sup>4</sup> Nichols, *Conversations with Madeleine Milhaud*, 96.

settled there. He also taught at the Aspen Music Festival and was the honorary director of the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara. While in the United States, several of Milhaud's relatives died in the Holocaust. In his autobiography, Milhaud wrote about the death of his young nephew Jean Milhaud and "more than twenty near or distant cousins in the German extermination camps."<sup>5</sup>

Milhaud lived in the United States until 1947, and several additional Jewish works date from this American period.<sup>6</sup> They include the ballet *Moïse* (1940), *Borechou schema Israël* for cantor, chorus, and organ (1944), *Caïn et Abel* for narrator and orchestra (1944), and *Kaddisch* for cantor, chorus, and organ (1945). Milhaud completed the *Sacred Service* during the summer of 1947 at Mills College and returned to France in August of that same year.<sup>7</sup> Upon his return, the Paris Conservatory appointed him professor of composition. Milhaud also maintained his teaching position at Mills College and returned there every other year until 1971.

Milhaud composed several additional works of Jewish inspiration after his return to France. They include *Le Candélabre à sept branches* for piano solo (1951), the opera *David* (1952-53), *Le Château du feu* for chorus and orchestra (1954), *Trois Psaumes de David* for a cappella chorus (1954), *Service pour la veille du Sabbat* for

---

<sup>5</sup> Milhaud, *My Happy Life*, 213.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Walker, "Milhaud and America," *The Musical Times* 133, no. 1795 (September 1992): 443-444.

<sup>7</sup> Darius Milhaud, *Service Sacré pour le samedi matin* (Paris: Éditions Salabert, 1950), 75; Darius Milhaud, *Notes Without Music*, ed. Rollo Myers, trans. Donald Evans (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), 304.

children's chorus and organ (1955), *Cantate de l'invitation (Bar mitzvah Israël 1948-1961)* for chorus and orchestra (1960), *Cantata from Job* for baritone solo, chorus, and organ (1965-66), *Cantate de Psaumes* for voice and orchestra (1967), *Ode pour Jérusalem* for orchestra (1972), and *Ani maamin, un chant perdu et retrouvé* for 4 narrators, soprano solo, chorus, and orchestra (1972).

Jeremy Drake, author of the *Grove Music Online* article about Milhaud, noted that the events of World War II inspired several of Milhaud's later compositions.<sup>8</sup> One example is the cantata *Le Château du feu*, a dramatic choral setting of a text by Jean Cassou (1897-1986) that expresses the painfulness of the Holocaust. The work is approximately 12 minutes in length and was written for a concert organized by the Réseau du Souvenir, an organization devoted to keeping alive the memory of the Jews who had been deported during the Holocaust. Milhaud dedicated it "to the memory of my nephew Jean Milhaud and that of Eric and Helen Allatini, deported during the 1939-1945 war and murdered by the Germans."<sup>9</sup>

By 1948, rheumatoid arthritis had confined Milhaud to a wheelchair. Despite this fact, Milhaud conducted a performance of *Le Château du feu* and did not allow his handicap to stop him from publicly expressing his support for human rights: "I could not move except with the aid of two nurses and went out only in exceptional

---

<sup>8</sup> Jeremy Drake, "Milhaud, Darius," in *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/18674> (accessed May 16, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> Darius Milhaud, *Le Château du feu* (Paris: Éditions Max Eschig, 1957). Eric Allatini was Milhaud's cousin.

circumstances. I was carried to the Palias de Chaillot for the performance of my cantata *Le Château du feu*, which I insisted on conducting.”<sup>10</sup>

The war also inspired Milhaud’s last choral composition, *Ani maamin, un chant perdu et retrouvé*, a major work of about 70 minutes in length on a text by Elie Wiesel. In this work, the chorus represents the Jewish people who hold to their belief in God and the coming Messiah despite the suffering they have endured. Wiesel’s text is built around a song he heard sung in his youth that he described as “a call to faith and an affirmation that even though he was late, the Redeemer would make his appearance one day.”<sup>11</sup> Later in life, Wiesel learned that Jewish prisoners had sung this song on their way to the Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camps Treblinka and Birkenau.

Milhaud paid homage to his Jewish heritage and the victims of the Holocaust in the *Sacred Service*, *Le Château du feu*, and *Ani maamin*. His choral oeuvre also includes 2 major works of Christian inspiration: the choral *Te Deum* from his Third Symphony (1946) and *Pacem in Terris*, a work for alto and baritone solos, chorus, and orchestra (1963) with a text by Pope John XXIII. The Pope’s text, according to Madeleine Milhaud,

recommends ecumenism in the Christian Church and the right to honour God according to one’s own conscience. It condemns racism, the distress of

---

<sup>10</sup> Milhaud, *My Happy Life*, 232.

<sup>11</sup> Elie Wiesel, *And the Sea is Never Full: Memoirs, 1969-*, trans. Marion Wiesel (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 67.

political refugees, the arms race. How can one not be impressed by such a far-reaching text? Contrary to what a large part of the public thinks, composers feel free to go down quite varied paths. The essential thing is to believe in what you express.<sup>12</sup>

*Grove Music Online* said that Milhaud “is the composer of one of the largest and most important bodies of song and choral music in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>13</sup> Paul Collaer (1891-1989), Belgian musicologist and close friend of Milhaud’s, noted that the *Sacred Service* is one of two “monumental” works that “dominate” his choral output (the other being *Pacem in Terris*).<sup>14</sup> Milhaud himself once referred to the *Sacred Service* as “one of the great works of my life.”<sup>15</sup> This study provides a detailed analysis of the *Sacred Service*, a relatively unknown work in the standard western choral canon, in order to increase the understanding of this composition that both Collaer and Milhaud viewed as so significant among Milhaud’s choral works.

### **Musical Context: Aspects of Milhaud’s Musical Style**

Milhaud’s complete catalog of works includes several reoccurring stylistic traits, and among these traits are (1) a focus on melody, (2) neoclassical design, and (3) the use of polytonality. Each of these elements play a significant role in the

---

<sup>12</sup> Nichols, *Conversations with Madeleine Milhaud*, 96.

<sup>13</sup> Drake, "Milhaud, Darius," in *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Collaer, *Darius Milhaud*, ed. and trans. Jane Hohfeld Galante (San Francisco: San Francisco Press, 1988), 179.

<sup>15</sup> Darius Milhaud to Ruben Rinder, December 25, 1947, Reuben R. Rinder Papers, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. The appendix includes the complete letter.

*Sacred Service*, and an understanding of their importance to Milhaud offers insight into the construction and design of the service as a whole.

The stylistic element of primary importance to Milhaud was melody.<sup>16</sup> At the Paris Conservatory, he studied counterpoint, composition, and orchestration with André Gédalge. In his autobiography, Milhaud recalled Gédalge's advice to him: "Just write eight bars that can be sung without accompaniment."<sup>17</sup> In his book about Milhaud, Collaer also noted, "Milhaud could never sufficiently praise his teacher, André Gédalge, for having impressed upon him the need to make melody the essence of musical composition."<sup>18</sup> Collaer criticized the lack of melody in the music of Wagner, Schoenberg, and the Franck-D'Indy school but praised its use by other composers, including Milhaud:

Melody has been the point of departure for all the finest composers: Monteverdi, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Berlioz all have this characteristic in common, no matter how different their styles. So it is with Milhaud. The entire significance of his music depends on the indispensable presence of melodic line.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Milhaud, *My Happy Life*, 65.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 65

<sup>18</sup> Collaer, *Darius Milhaud*, 33.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 33-34.

Collaer further described Milhaud's melodies as "straight-forward and unambiguous,"<sup>20</sup> and, indeed, many of the melodies of the *Sacred Service* fit this description. The work's simple, folk-like melodies are at the forefront of the composition, and the melodic analysis in Chapter IV presents a detailed discussion.

Milhaud's focus on melodic simplicity is a trait of neoclassicism. Neoclassical traits are not only heard in the melodies of the *Sacred Service* but are apparent throughout the entire work. *Grove Music Online* defined neoclassicism in the following way:

A movement of style in the works of certain 20th-century composers, who, particularly during the period between the two world wars, revived the balanced forms and clearly perceptible thematic processes of earlier styles to replace what were, to them, the increasingly exaggerated gestures and formlessness of late Romanticism.<sup>21</sup>

Impressionism is one of the formless styles from which neoclassicists, such as Milhaud, were turning away. The music of impressionist composers "substitute[s] sequences of major 2nds, unresolved chords and other sound-colours for precise designs, solid, clear forms, and logical developments."<sup>22</sup> Milhaud was a part of the

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 35

<sup>21</sup> Arnold Whittall, "Neo-classicism," in *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/19723> (accessed July 20, 2011).

<sup>22</sup> Jann Pasler, "Impressionism," in *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/50026> (accessed July 20, 2011).

aesthetic change from impressionist formlessness to neoclassical precision that was occurring in France just after World War I.

When Milhaud returned to Paris in 1919 after having spent time in Brazil during the war, he soon became interested in the new artistic developments around him. Milhaud described them in this way: "Reacting against the impressionism of the post-Debussy composers, what musicians asked for now was a clearer, sturdier, more precise type of art that should yet not have lost its qualities of human sympathy and sensitivity."<sup>23</sup> Also, after hearing Francis Poulenc perform 2 of his new compositions, Milhaud concluded, "After all the vapours of impressionism, would not this simple, clear art renewing the tradition of Mozart and Scarlatti, represent the next phase in the development of our music?"<sup>24</sup>

The French writer, actor, and painter Jean Cocteau (1889-1963) was a contemporary of Milhaud's and an important influence in the move away from impressionism. In his 1919 publication, *Le Coq et l'arlequin*, Cocteau praised the simplicity heard in the music of Eric Satie (1866-1925) and criticized the impressionists for their fear of "bareness, emptiness, silence."<sup>25</sup> He also called for

---

<sup>23</sup> Milhaud, *My Happy Life*, 82.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 82-83. Poulenc played *Trois Mouvements perpétuels* and sang *Le Bestiaire*.

<sup>25</sup> Jean Cocteau, *A Call to Order*, trans. Rollo Myers (New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1974), 18-19.



the end of impressionism and, according to Milhaud, advocated for a new type of music that was “decisively French.”<sup>26</sup>

In the 1920s, a group of French avant-garde composers, which included Milhaud, Georges Auric (1899-1983), Louis Durey (1888-1979), Arthur Honegger (1892-1955), Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), and Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983), drew the attention of music critic Henri Collet (1885-1951) who labeled the group “Les Six.” The group held a shared admiration for the “flip anti-Romanticism” espoused by Cocteau’s *Le Coq et l’arlequin*.<sup>27</sup> Levin noted both Cocteau and Satie’s influence on Milhaud and his contemporaries in their acceptance of a new musical aesthetic that valued “simplicity, directness, avoidance of excess sentimentality, sounds relates to nature and everyday life, and, perhaps above all, that attribute so prized by certain French poets of a previous era: *la clarté*—clarity.”<sup>28</sup> These neoclassical aesthetic ideas that Milhaud embraced are apparent in the design of his *Sacred Service*, as the formal analysis in Chapter IV demonstrates.

Another hallmark of Milhaud’s music is polytonality or the use of 2 or more keys simultaneously. He first began to explore polytonality around 1915 after hearing a canon at the fifth composed by J. S. Bach.<sup>29</sup> Milhaud believed the canon

---

<sup>26</sup> Milhaud, *My Happy Life*, 84.

<sup>27</sup> Paul Griffiths, “Six, Les,” in *The Oxford Companion to Music*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e6228> (accessed July 20, 2011).

<sup>28</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 6.

<sup>29</sup> Milhaud, *My Happy Life*, 65.

gave the impression of the same tune in 2 different keys superimposed upon one another. To 21<sup>st</sup> century ears, polytonality is not at all surprising; however, a 1920 performance of a polytonal work by Milhaud, *Suite symphonique* for orchestra, provoked such a violent reaction from the audience that it required police intervention.<sup>30</sup> The conductor of the orchestra, Gabriel Pierné, received a letter from Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) in which he clearly stated his disapproval of polytonality: "I am grieved to see that you are opening the doors to all sorts of bedlam aberrations and trying to force them down the public's throats when it protests. Several instruments playing in different keys have never produced music, only babel!"<sup>31</sup>

Despite Saint-Saëns' reaction, the dissonance produced by Milhaud's use of polytonality is conservative when compared to Arnold Schoenberg's (1874-1951) serial works of the 1920s. Milhaud's music is tonal, and polytonality is a tool he used to add harmonic color and interest within a greater tonal framework. This practice contributed to Milhaud's aim for simplicity and clarity in his music. Also, as Collaer noted, polytonality supported Milhaud's focus on melody:

For a composer who had chosen melody as the inevitable means of portraying human drama, what more felicitous solution could there be than this combination of simultaneous, rather than successive, melodic lines, each

---

<sup>30</sup> Milhaud, *Notes Without Music*, 105-106.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 107.

one conserving its own individuality and freedom while joining with the others.<sup>32</sup>

The harmonic analysis in Chapter IV includes examples of Milhaud's use of polytonality in the *Sacred Service*.

This chapter has brought to light pertinent aspects of Milhaud's life and musical style for the purpose of better understanding the context in which he wrote the *Sacred Service*. Milhaud's Jewish heritage, study at the Paris Conservatory, and association with Cocteau all played a significant role in the formation of his style. Also, his immigration to the United States during World War II set the stage for the composition of the *Sacred Service*. Chapter II addresses Milhaud's time in the United States and the circumstances that led to the composition of the *Sacred Service*.

---

<sup>32</sup> Collaer, *Darius Milhaud*, 37.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SEARCH FOR A JEWISH PALESTRINA

The commissioning of the *Sacred Service* occurred in 1947, near the end of Milhaud's 7-year stay in the United States. Reuben Rider (1887-1966), cantor of San Francisco's Temple Emanu-El, was responsible for commissioning Milhaud. Rider had long been a supporter of San Francisco's musical life and was an active proponent of new music. Beginning in 1922, he organized performances of oratorios and cantatas in Temple Emanu-El, which included works such as Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, Mendelsson's *Elijah*, Gaul's *Ruth*, and Honegger's *King David*.<sup>1</sup> For these performances, the temple choir joined forces with local university choirs and members of the San Francisco Symphony. Rider also discovered and encouraged support for several child prodigies, including Yehudi Menuhin, Isaac Stern, and Leon Fleischer.

Realizing that the majority of well-known western religious music had been written for the church, Rider was determined to increase the amount of quality music being written for the synagogue and even find "a Jewish Palestrina."<sup>2</sup> One of his earliest attempts to achieve this goal was the founding of the Society for the

---

<sup>1</sup> Frank Rosenbaum, *Visions of Reform: Congregation Emanu-El and the Jews of San Francisco, 1849-1999* (Berkeley: Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2000), 160-162.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 162.

Advancement of Synagogue Music in 1927. The society sponsored a competition for the composition of a setting of the text “Adon Olam,” which is used at the end of the traditional Jewish Sabbath Service.

One of Rinder’s greatest contributions to music was his commissioning of 4 complete settings of the Jewish Sabbath Service by active Jewish composers, including Bloch, Milhaud, Marc Lavry (1903-1967), and Paul Ben-Haim (1897-1984). Frederick Jacobi (1891-1952), the brother of a member of the Temple Emanu-El congregation, also wrote a service, which was performed at the temple in 1932. However, Rinder did not commission this service.

To understand the purpose behind these commissions, one must look back to the time of the earliest commission. Rinder first met Bloch in Cleveland, Ohio when Bloch was the Director of the Cleveland Institute of Music. During this meeting, Rinder mentioned to Bloch that the San Francisco Conservatory of Music was in need of a director and encouraged him to consider the position. Bloch was open to the idea, and, upon returning to California, Rinder informed the conservatory’s director of Bloch’s interest. As a result, Bloch moved to the Bay area to direct the conservatory from 1925-1930.

Having Bloch, a well-known Jewish composer, in close proximity provided Rinder with another opportunity to promote the composition of new music for the synagogue. Rose Rinder, wife of the cantor, said:

It was during that time that we got to know Ernest Bloch quite well, and it was during that time that my husband thought that Bloch ought to be

commissioned to write a Service for the synagogue. Here we had one of the greatest composers living, the greatest Jewish composer, and there had been so little Jewish music written by modern composers that this was our opportunity.<sup>3</sup>

Bloch accepted the commission in 1929 but not without some initial hesitation. Rinder was able to raise \$3,000.00 for Bloch, and, in February 1930, Bloch left his position at the conservatory to return to his homeland of Switzerland to compose *Avodath Hakodesh*. The work was premiered in Italy in 1934 but was not heard in San Francisco until March 28, 1938.

The American premier received a glowing review in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Reviewer Alfred Frankenstein proclaimed that Bloch's residency in San Francisco had been the city's "most important happening, from the point of view of musical creation."<sup>4</sup> He also declared *Avodath Hakodesh* "a masterpiece" and also compared Bloch's writing to that of some of the world's greatest composers:

[*Avodath Hakodesh*] speaks at times with an epic grandeur paralleled only in Handel and Bach, with an awful, subdued sense of mystery and wonder akin to the final meditations of Beethoven, with a soft lyric breath like that in the 'German Requiem' of Brahms.

---

<sup>3</sup> Malca Chall, *Rose Rinder: Music, Prayer, and Religious Leadership, 1913-1969* (Berkeley: Judah L. Magnes Museum, 1971), 48.

<sup>4</sup> Alfred Frankenstein, "Bloch's 'Sacred Service' Heard First Time in S. F.," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 29, 1938.

The title of another review by Alexander Fried in the *San Francisco Examiner* further lauded Bloch's work: "Reverent audience hails masterpiece by Ernest Bloch."<sup>5</sup>

Nearly 20 years passed between Rinder's commissioning of Bloch and Milhaud. Rinder became acquainted with Milhaud when Milhaud was teaching in the San Francisco Bay area at Mills College. Milhaud used to visit the Rinders in their home, and it was during a Seder in 1947 that Rinder asked Milhaud to write the service.<sup>6</sup> Milhaud happily accepted the commission and completed his *Sacred Service* in only 2 months. Milhaud dedicated the work to "Mrs. E. S. Heller," the daughter of California banking giant Isaias W. Hellman, because she funded the commission.<sup>7</sup>

Milhaud's service premiered at Temple Emanu-El on May 18, 1949 with the composer conducting. The performance included a 150-voice chorus from the University of California, members of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, and Rinder as narrator. Both Fried and Frankenstein also reviewed Milhaud's work. Fried declared the premier "an important musical event" and described the work as "deepfelt and original."<sup>8</sup> He found the work to be "full of touching visions and

---

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Fried, "Reverent Audience Hails Masterpiece by Ernest Bloch," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 29, 1938.

<sup>6</sup> Chall, *Rose Rinder*, 71.

<sup>7</sup> Rosenbaum, *Visions of Reform*, 169.

<sup>8</sup> Fried, "Milhaud Leads 'Sacred Service,'" *San Francisco Examiner*, May 20, 1949. The appendix includes the complete review.

fascinating interweavings of quiet, unusual sound” and also said that the work had “a subtle beauty that should reveal more and more inspiration on further hearing.”

Fried’s only words of criticism were related to this subtlety: “Since it offers nothing in the way of pomp and little in the way of driving climax, most of it is quiet. Some listeners may at first find parts of it dull. And in fact it is on the whole not as large and vigorous as it might be within its chosen spirit of modest reverence.” The dullness to which Fried referred is perhaps due to the neoclassic simplicity apparent throughout the work.

Frankenstein’s review praised Milhaud for his blending of “mysticism and classic clarity” and stated, “It is extremely likely that Milhaud’s service will find its way into the general choral literature.”<sup>9</sup> However, like Fried, Frankenstein also noted “a degree of sameness” and said, “The score would be more monumental in effect if its mood and pace were not so even.”

About a year after Milhaud composed the Sabbath Morning Service, he wrote 5 additional movements so that the work was also appropriate for use in the Friday Sabbath Evening Service. Milhaud added these movements because temple attendance typically was greater on Friday evening than on Saturday morning.<sup>10</sup> In fact, some Reform synagogues do not hold regular Sabbath Morning Services. The movements that Milhaud added were premiered at Temple Emanu-El on August 17,

---

<sup>9</sup> Frankenstein, “New Work by Milhaud Performed at Emanu-El,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 20, 1949. The appendix includes the complete review.

<sup>10</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 9.



1949. Fried amplified his criticism of Milhaud in his review of this performance:

“Only a few passages of the ‘Friday Service’ have any touch of liveliness or exultation or dramatic force. This fact makes the work hardly suitable for concert repertoire even though a patient listener will find in it many remarkable, sensitive beauties.”<sup>11</sup>

Possibly, both Fried and Frankenstein found Milhaud’s service dull in comparison to Bloch’s dramatic writing, although neither compared the two. Yet, Frankenstein’s criticism of the “sameness” of Milhaud’s service stands in sharp contrast to his description of Bloch’s service:

[*Avodath Hakodesh*] is rich, climatic, subtly harmonized, marvelously colored with the full symphonic and full choral palate, dramatic to the verge of opera in its contrasts of pace and sonority. There are even suggestions of [Wagner’s] ‘Parsifal’ here and there...<sup>12</sup>

As Frankenstein noted, Bloch’s service contains several stylistic characteristics from the late romantic period. For example, he divided the work into 5 parts, and, although each part contains several different texts, Bloch linked the texts together musically to make each part continuous. In contrast, Milhaud divided his service into 4 parts and further separated the parts into short movements according to the text. Ludwid Altman, organist at Temple Emanu-El, said that Milhaud’s work was “liturgically superior” to Bloch’s because its individual

---

<sup>11</sup> Fried, “Music Teachers Hear Debut of Milhaud Religious Music,” *San Francisco Examiner*, August 19, 1949. The appendix includes the complete review.

<sup>12</sup> Frankenstein, “Bloch’s ‘Sacred Service’ Heard First Time in S. F.”

movements could be excerpted for use in the liturgy.<sup>13</sup> Altman found Bloch's service to be "a never-ending carpet."

The continuity found in the operas of Wagner and in Bloch's service was a style from which Milhaud intentionally turned away. He was not fond of the music of Wagner, and, after hearing of one too many Wagner festivals, Milhaud actually wrote an article in 1920 titled "Down with Wagner!"<sup>14</sup> Though Milhaud received many letters in protest to his article, his opinion did not change:

Wagner was worshipped like the Golden Calf. And I hated his music more with every day that passed, for it represented a type of art that I detested; yet I could never have guessed that it would one day become the standard-bearer of Nazi philosophy until the day when its high-priests would be swallowed up in the new *Götterdämmerung*.<sup>15</sup>

The dramatic contrasts between Bloch and Milhaud's services can be clearly heard in their setting of the Shema, "the Jewish confession of faith."<sup>16</sup> Bloch introduced this section of the liturgy with a 10 measure orchestral fanfare that includes majestic dotted rhythms and open fifths in the brass lines. The cantor's melody is a quasi-recitative; it is marked "misterioso" and accompanied by a

---

<sup>13</sup> Rosenbaum, *Visions of Reform*, 170.

<sup>14</sup> Milhaud, *My Happy Life*, 95.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 95. *Götterdämmerung* is the last opera of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. Milhaud's quote is a play on this title, which is also defined as the fall of a regime.

<sup>16</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), s.v. "Shema."

tremolo in the low strings. The melody concludes with a jarring tri-tone leap and an orchestral sforzando.

Milhaud introduced his setting of the Shema with 4 measures of soft chords. The cantor's melody is folk-like and tuneful and is accompanied by gentle strings and woodwinds in thirds. No evidence exists to confirm that Milhaud was familiar with Bloch's service. However, one cannot help but notice that Milhaud set the Shema in a style nearly opposite to that of Bloch. Perhaps Fried and Frankenstein's negative views of the simplicity in Milhaud's service stem from a misunderstanding of his stylistic choices. Milhaud's compositional style was an aesthetic decision based on a desire for clarity and, possibly, his personal interpretation of the text. The perceived lack of drama in his work makes it no less important than Bloch's.

As noted above, nearly 20 years passed between Rinder's commissioning of Bloch and Milhaud. The fact that Rinder chose Milhaud demonstrates the high regard in which he was held. When asked the reason for the length of time between the two commissions, Mrs. Rinder said, "there was no outstanding Jewish composer."<sup>17</sup> She said that they had considered Aaron Copland but never proceeded because "he was so modern."<sup>18</sup> Rinder was seeking a composer of stature who would set the Jewish liturgy in a more traditional manner. "After all," said Mrs. Rinder, "a service should be somewhat in the tradition of the synagogue. And while

---

<sup>17</sup> Chall, *Rose Rinder*, 70.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 70; Rosenbaum, *Visions of Reform*, 168. Rinder did ask Leonard Bernstein to write a service, but he refused.

Milhaud's was certainly much less traditional than Ernest Bloch's, it has the artistic restraint and dignity so right for a service."<sup>19</sup>

Milhaud's compositional style was certainly more traditional than that of one of his Jewish contemporaries, Arnold Schoenberg. Like Milhaud, Schoenberg moved to the United States in 1933 because of growing anti-Semitism in Germany and resided in Los Angeles from 1934 until his death in 1951. Bloch and Milhaud's proximity to San Francisco must have played a part in their being commissioned by Rinder. But why did Schoenberg, who had moved to Los Angeles 4 years before the premier of Bloch's service in San Francisco, never receive such a commission? Mrs. Rinder's comments indicate that his modern compositional techniques were not within the traditional boundaries that appealed to Rinder and trumped his fame and locale.

Reuben Rinder's efforts to increase the amount of quality music being written for the synagogue resulted in the composition of 2 substantial choral works. Both Bloch and Milhaud's services have enriched the choral repertoire, each offering their own musical style and interpretation of the liturgical text. One of the reasons for the lack of knowledge of Milhaud's work is a general unfamiliarity with the Jewish liturgy. Chapters III analyzes the liturgical text of Milhaud's service with the hopes of encouraging an increased appreciation for the work.

---

<sup>19</sup> Chall, *Rose Rinder*, 70-71.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE REFORM LITURGY AND THE TEXT OF THE *SACRED SERVICE*

Milhaud's *Sacred Service* is a relatively unknown work in the standard western choral canon, and one likely reason for this is the lack of familiarity with the Jewish liturgy. A 2011 statistical abstract of the United States from the U. S. Census Bureau states that Jews make up only 2.1 percent of the U. S. population.<sup>1</sup> When compared to the fact that Christians make up 47.4 percent, this lack of familiarity is easy to understand. Also, since more than half of the Christian population is Catholic, a greater acquaintance with choral compositions in the Catholic tradition, such as masses and requiems, is a natural result.

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the Jewish liturgy within the context of Milhaud's *Sacred Service* in order to better understand the design of the work. To this end, this chapter includes an explanation of the differences between Orthodox and Reform Judaism. It also includes excerpts of the texts from Milhaud's service and descriptions of their meaning within the Reform liturgy.

The temple responsible for the commissioning of Milhaud's *Sacred Service*, San Francisco's Temple Emanu-El, is affiliated with Reform Judaism, a liberal movement that developed out of the strict Jewish Orthodox tradition. Orthodoxy is

---

<sup>1</sup> U. S. Census Bureau, "The 2011 Statistical Abstract," <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/population/religion.html> (accessed June 17, 2011).

the most traditional Jewish denomination and a minority in the world's Jewish population.<sup>2</sup> Several aspects of Jewish Orthodox worship set it apart from other Jewish denominations. For example, men and women sit separately in Orthodox synagogue services, and they do not use organ. Also, a minyan, a quorum of 10 Jewish men, must be present before a service can begin, and a male rabbi leads the services in Hebrew.<sup>3</sup>

The Reform movement began in Germany in the 19<sup>th</sup> century from a desire to adapt traditional Jewish practices to modern society.<sup>4</sup> The movement has altered Jewish worship in several ways, including allowing the mixed seating of men and women, incorporating the vernacular along with Hebrew, and introducing organ and choral music into the service.<sup>5</sup> Synagogue services did not regularly include choral music until this time. The choirs of these Reform congregations were open to men, women, and even non-Jews.<sup>6</sup>

The differences between Orthodox and Reform Judaism are important to the understanding of Milhaud's service because of their musical implications. The Reform movement allowed for both the inclusion of women in the choir and instrumental accompaniment. Also, Reform practice allowed Milhaud to incorporate

---

<sup>2</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, s.v. "Orthodoxy."

<sup>3</sup> Michael Malloy, *Experiencing the World's Religions: Tradition, Challenge, and Change*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2010), 333.

<sup>4</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, s.v. "Reform Judaism."

<sup>5</sup> Malloy, *Experiencing the World's Religions*, 335.

<sup>6</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, s.v. "Choir."

texts in both Hebrew and English or French into his service. Presumably, Milhaud intended the work to be performed in Hebrew and English in English speaking countries and in Hebrew and French in French speaking countries.

Milhaud included 2 versions of the Hebrew text in the score, Sephardic in Roman type and Ashkenazi in italics. A note from the editor in the 1950 choral score explains why Milhaud used both versions; the Sephardim and Ashkenazim are Jewish cultural subgroups that differ in their pronunciation of Hebrew.<sup>7</sup> The Hebrew of Sephardic Jews comes from Mediterranean countries, and that of Ashkenazi Jews comes from central and northern Europe, England, and the United States. The editor argues for use of the Sephardic pronunciation because it is the State of Israel's official language, and the U. S. Assembly of Rabbis adopted it for use in all its Sacred Services. Also, a 1958 recording of the *Sacred Service* with Milhaud conducting uses the Sephardic pronunciation.<sup>8</sup>

Milhaud based his *Sacred Service* on the Sabbath Morning Service from *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, the American Reform movement's principal prayerbook.<sup>9</sup> For this reason, the work is appropriate for both concert and liturgical performance. A concert performance of Milhaud's music for the morning service would be approximately 55 minutes in length. For synagogue use, Milhaud divided

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., s.v. "Sephardim;" Malloy, *Experiencing the World's Religions*, 331-332.

<sup>8</sup> Darius Milhaud, *Service sacré pour le samedi matin*, orchestra dir. Darius Milhaud and chorus dir. Yvonne Gouverné, Universal Classical France 4761590, CD, 1958.

<sup>9</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 9.

the morning service into 20 individual movements that are easily incorporated into the liturgy. In an actual service, there are 2 elements (the reading from the Torah and the sermon) that would be added between Milhaud's movements. Milhaud did not set these elements to music because their text changes from week to week.

The Jewish Sabbath Morning Service occurs on Saturday and consists of 5 main sections: a morning blessing, the Shema and its blessings, the Amidah, the Torah Service, and closing prayers.<sup>10</sup> Figure 1 shows how these sections line up with the 4 parts of Milhaud's service. The following examination of these texts offers insight into the meaning of the Reform Sabbath Service. For clarity, this chapter refers to the 5 sections of the Jewish liturgy as "sections" and the 4 parts of Milhaud's work as "parts."

Parts 1 and 2 of Milhaud's service are made up of the first 3 sections of the Sabbath Morning Service. "Ma Tovu" opens Milhaud's work and serves as the morning blessing. The choir and cantor sing this movement in Hebrew, and it begins with a text from Numbers 24:5, which is translated, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, thy dwellings, O Israel!"<sup>11</sup> The text also includes several verses from the Psalms (5:8, 26:8, 95:6, and 69:14).<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Stephen Einstein et al., *Introduction to Judaism: A Sourcebook*, rev. ed. (New York: UAHC Press, 1998), 203-209.

<sup>11</sup> The Central Conference of American Rabbis, *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, rev. ed. (Cincinnati: The Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1941), 100.

<sup>12</sup> Seth Ward, "The Liturgy of Bloch's *Avodath Ha-Kodesh*," *Modern Judaism* 23, no. 3 (October 2003): 249.



| <b>Outline of the Sabbath Morning Service</b> | <b>Milhaud's <i>Sacred Service</i></b> |
|---|--|
|   | <b>Part 1</b>                          |
| 1. Morning Blessing                           | 1. Ma Tovv                             |
| 2. The Shema and its blessings                | 2. Barekhu and Shema                   |
|   | 3. Veahavta                            |
|   | 4. Mi Khamokha                         |
|   | 5. Tsur Yisrael                        |
| 3. The Amidah                                 | 6. Praised Be Thou, O Lord             |
|   | 7. Kedushah                            |
|   | <b>Part 2</b>                          |
|   | 8. Prayer and response                 |
|   | 9. Silent prayer and Yihyu leratson    |
|   | <b>Part 3</b>                          |
| 4. The Torah Service                          | 10. Seu shearim                        |
|   | 11. Taking the scroll from the ark     |
|   | 12. Returning the scroll from the ark  |
|   | 13. The law of the Lord is perfect     |
|   | 14. Ets 'Hayim                         |
|   | <b>Part 4</b>                          |
| 5. Closing Prayers                            | 15. Adoration                          |
|   | 16. Vaana'hnu                          |
|   | 17. Universal prayer                   |
|   | 18. Kaddish                            |
|   | 19. Adon Olam                          |
|   | 20. Benediction                        |

**Figure 1. Comparison of the Sabbath Morning Service and Milhaud's *Sacred Service*.**

Milhaud devoted movements 2 through 5 to the Shema and its blessings. Movement 2 starts with the Barekhu, a call to prayer.<sup>13</sup> The text begins, "Praise ye the Lord to whom all praise is due," which the narrator first recites in Hebrew and

---

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 249.

then translates into English or French.<sup>14</sup> As would be expected in the Reform service, this is the first of many instances of vernacular in Milhaud's work. Following the recitation, the cantor and choir sing the Barekhu in Hebrew.

Movement 2 continues with the Shema. This text is from Deuteronomy 6:4 and states, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One."<sup>15</sup> The Shema is "the basic theological statement of Judaism" and "a vital part of the liturgy."<sup>16</sup> Milhaud set the Shema in the same manner as the Barekhu; first, the narrator recites it in Hebrew and the vernacular, and then, the cantor and choir sing it in Hebrew. The *Union Prayerbook* indicates that the congregation should rise for both the Barekhu and the Shema; however, Milhaud did not mention this in the score.

Milhaud set movement 3, "Veahavta," as a cantor solo in Hebrew. The text is from Deuteronomy 6:5-9, which follows the Shema. In movement 4, "Mi Khamokha," the choir and cantor present a text in Hebrew based on the Song of the Sea from Exodus 15.<sup>17</sup> This is the song that Moses sang in praise to God for the deliverance of the Hebrew people through the Red Sea.<sup>18</sup> One can see how Milhaud carefully followed the *Union Prayerbook* design in his setting of this movement; he divided the text between choir and cantor just as the prayerbook divides the text between

---

<sup>14</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 6.

<sup>15</sup> *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 120.

<sup>16</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, s.v. "Shema."

<sup>17</sup> Ward, "The Liturgy of Bloch's *Avodath Ha-Kodesh*," 249.

<sup>18</sup> Einstein et al., *Introduction to Judaism*, 205.

“choir” and “reader.”<sup>19</sup> This section of the liturgy ends with movement 5, “Tsur Yisrael” or “Rock of Israel,” a cantor solo in Hebrew on a traditional, non-biblical text.<sup>20</sup> To bring closure to this section, Milhaud added a choral “Amen” in the last 2 measures of the movement.

The Amidah is the third section of the Sabbath Morning Service and is “the main statutory prayer in Jewish public and private worship.”<sup>21</sup> It begins with 3 berachot (blessings), titled Avot, Gevurot, and Kedushah, which offer praise to God.<sup>22</sup> Milhaud set the first 2 of these in movement 6, where the narrator recites them in English or French over orchestral accompaniment.

The cantor and choir present the third blessing in Hebrew in movement 7, “Kedushah.” The *Union Prayerbook* titles this portion of the liturgy “Sanctification,” and it includes the text “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory” from Isaiah 6:3.<sup>23</sup> The final line of this blessing is from Psalm 146:10: “The Lord will reign forever, thy God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Hallelujah.”<sup>24</sup> Milhaud set this text in a joyful, dance-like manner to bring part 1 of his service to a close.

---

<sup>19</sup> *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 122-124.

<sup>20</sup> Ward, “The Liturgy of Bloch’s *Avodath Ha-Kodesh*,” 249-250.

<sup>21</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, s.v. “Amidah.”

<sup>22</sup> Einstein et al., *Introduction to Judaism*, 205.

<sup>23</sup> *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 126.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

Part 2 of Milhaud's service begins with a movement for narrator and choir titled "Prayer and response." The movement includes 4 orchestrally accompanied prayers and 4 a cappella choral responses. All text in this movement is in the vernacular, and the narrator/choir alternation follows the call and response pattern from the *Union Prayerbook*.<sup>25</sup> Movement 9, "Silent Prayer and Yihyu leratzon," begins with a spoken prayer in the vernacular. It concludes with a setting of Psalm 19:14 ("Yihyu leratzon" in Hebrew) for unaccompanied SATB quartet. The text, which Milhaud set in Hebrew, English, and French, reads, "May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer."<sup>26</sup> Milhaud left the choice of language to the discretion of the conductor.

The Torah Service is the fourth section of the Sabbath Morning Service. The Torah is the first portion of the Hebrew Bible, which contains the books of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy.<sup>27</sup> In the synagogue, Torah scrolls are kept in a special shrine or closet called an ark, which, according to Jewish law, is "the holiest part of the synagogue."<sup>28</sup> In the *Union Prayerbook*, the Torah Service consists

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 130-131.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>27</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, s.v. "Torah."

<sup>28</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, s.v. "Aron Ha-Qodesh." Aron Ha-Qodesh is the Hebrew word for the synagogue ark.

of the following elements: (1) Taking the scroll from the ark, (2) Reading from the Torah, (3) Returning the scroll to the ark, and (4) a Sermon.<sup>29</sup>

Milhaud set the Torah Service in part 3 of his *Sacred Service*, and it consists of 5 movements. “Seu shearim,” movement 10, is an introductory choral movement in Hebrew with a text from Psalm 24:9-10. It begins, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory my come in.”<sup>30</sup> Movement 11, “Taking the scroll from the ark,” begins with a 21 measure orchestral introduction that allows time for the removal of the Torah scroll in an actual service. The movement continues with narrator, cantor, and choir; in a combination of Hebrew and the vernacular, their texts praise God, honor the Torah, and include a second statement of the Shema. In an actual service, the prayerbook indicates that a reading from the Torah would take place after this movement. There is, however, no mention of this in Milhaud’s score.

Movement 12, “Returning the scroll to the ark,” opens with a text from Psalm 34:3: “O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together.”<sup>31</sup> The narrator first recites the verse in the vernacular and then the cantor sings it in Hebrew. In an actual service, the cantor holds the Torah scrolls in his or her arms facing the congregation while singing this verse.<sup>32</sup> The movement continues with a

---

<sup>29</sup> *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 144-150.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 149.

<sup>32</sup> Ward, “The Liturgy of Bloch’s *Avodath Ha-Kodesh*,” 253.

choral fugue in Hebrew on a text from Psalm 148:13-14 ("His glory is in the earth and in the heavens...").<sup>33</sup> In the Jewish liturgy, the Torah is returned to the ark during the singing of this text.<sup>34</sup>

The last 2 movements of Milhaud's Torah Service, "The law of the Lord is perfect" and "Ets 'Hayim," allow for additional time to return the scroll to the ark. The former is an orchestrally accompanied prayer in the vernacular based on Psalm 19:7-9. Milhaud's score indicates that the ark should be closed following this movement. The latter is a setting of Proverbs 3:18 and 17 ("It is a tree of life for them that hold fast to it...") for cantor and men's choir in Hebrew.<sup>35</sup> In the prayerbook, a sermon follows this text, but there is no reference to this in Milhaud's score.

The final section of the Sabbath Morning Service includes several closing prayers. Part 4 of Milhaud's service includes these closing prayers and begins with a spoken prayer in the vernacular, titled "Adoration," over a simple accompaniment. The cantor and choir sing the next movement, "Vaana'hnu," in Hebrew. Its text states, "We bow the knee, bow in worship, and give thanks to the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, praised be He."<sup>36</sup> As the text indicates, the

---

<sup>33</sup> *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 149.

<sup>34</sup> Ward, "The Liturgy of Bloch's *Avodath Ha-Kodesh*," 253-254.

<sup>35</sup> *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 150.

<sup>36</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 13.

congregation traditionally bends at the knee while slightly bowing forward at this point in the liturgy.<sup>37</sup>

Milhaud's service continues with movement 17, "Universal prayer," which is another spoken prayer in the vernacular. This text speaks of the brotherhood of man and looks forward to a day when all men and women will worship the Hebrew God: "O may all, created in Thine image, recognize that they are brethren, so that, one in spirit and one in fellowship, they may be forever united before Thee."<sup>38</sup> At the conclusion of this movement, the women of the choir sing a brief phrase from Zechariah 14:9: "On that day the Lord shall be one and His name shall be One."<sup>39</sup> Milhaud set this verse in Hebrew, English, and French, and again leaves the choice of language to the conductor's discretion.

Movement 18 is titled "Kaddish." In the liturgy, the Kaddish is a recitation for mourners, and the prayerbook asks mourners to rise at this point in the service.<sup>40</sup> It is common to hear the entire congregation recite this text in unison in Reform services.<sup>41</sup> Milhaud included 2 versions of the "Kaddish" in his service; the narrator and choir recite the first, and the cantor and choir sing the other. The reason for

---

<sup>37</sup> Ward, "The Liturgy of Bloch's *Avodath Ha-Kodesh*," 254.

<sup>38</sup> *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 151.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>40</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, s.v. "Qaddish;" *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 152.

<sup>41</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, s.v. "Qaddish."

Milhaud's inclusion of a sung version is not clear. Both versions use the same Hebrew text, and conductors should choose only one version for performance. Reform services characteristically use the recited version of the Kaddish.<sup>42</sup> However, the 1958 recording of the *Sacred Service* with Milhaud conducting uses the sung version.<sup>43</sup>

"Adon Olam," movement 19, is a closing song in Hebrew for choir. The Sabbath Morning Service in the prayerbook actually ends with a hymn titled "En Kelohenu," which begins, "Who is like Thee, O universal Lord? Who dares Thy praise and glory share?"<sup>44</sup> However, like Bloch, Milhaud chose to end his service with "Adon Olam," which is the hymn at the conclusion of the Sabbath Evening Service in the prayerbook. Its text begins, "Lord of the world, who reigned even before form was created, at the time when His will brought everything into existence, then His Name was proclaimed King."<sup>45</sup>

The prayerbook calls for a benediction following the closing hymn, but it does not include a text. Again, like Bloch, Milhaud chose the benediction from Numbers 6:24-26 to bring the Sabbath Morning Service to a close: "May the Lord bless thee and keep thee. May the Lord let his countenance shine upon thee and be

---

<sup>42</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 13.

<sup>43</sup> Darius Milhaud, *Service sacré pour le samedi matin*, Universal Classical France 4761590, 1958.

<sup>44</sup> Ward, "The Liturgy of Bloch's *Avodath Ha-Kodesh*," 255; *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 154.

<sup>45</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 13.



gracious unto thee. May the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.”<sup>46</sup> The movement includes narrator, cantor, and choir. Each line of the text is stated by the narrator in the vernacular and then sung by the cantor in Hebrew. The choir responds “Amen” to each of the cantor’s lines.

At the end of the score, Milhaud included 5 additional pieces for use in the Sabbath Evening Service that occurs on Friday. They are “Lekha dodi,” “Mi Khamokha,” “Veshameru,” “Elohenu,” and “Yisme’hu.” The texts of these movements also come from the *Union Prayerbook*, and all except “Mi Khamokha” refer to the Sabbath in some way. Milhaud listed the order of movements for the Sabbath Evening Service in the table of contents (Fig. 2). He interspersed the 5 new movements among certain movements from the morning service to create the 14 movement evening service.

---

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 14.

# TABLE

| SAMEDI MATIN<br>Sabbath Morning   |       | VENDREDI SOIR<br>Friday Evening   |       |
|---|-------|---|-------|
| <u>PREMIÈRE PARTIE</u>  |       |   |       |
|   | Pages |   |       |
| I. Ma Tovv<br>Mah Tovv  | 1     | I. Lekha dodi (v. Prières additionnelles I)<br>Lechoh dodi (in additional pieces I)                       | 76    |
| II. Borekhu et Shema<br>Borechu and Shema   | 6     | II. Borekhu et Shema<br>Borechu and Shema   | 6     |
| III. Veohavta<br>Veohavto   | 10    | III. Veohavta<br>Veohavto   | 10    |
| IV. Mi Khamokha (I)<br>Mi Chomocho (I)  | 12    | IV. Mi Khamokha (II des Prières additionnelles)<br>Mi Chomocho (II in additional pieces)                  | 80    |
| V. Tsur Yisrael<br>Tzur Yisroel   | 16    | V. Veshameru (III des Prières additionnelles)<br>Veshomeru (III in additional pieces)                     | 85    |
| VI. Sois loué, Seigneur<br>Praised be Thou, O Lord...   | 18    | VI. Eloheinu (IV des Prières additionnelles)<br>Eloheinu (IV in additional pieces)                        | 86    |
| IV. Kedushah  | 20    | VII. Yisme'hu (V des Prières additionnelles)<br>Yisme'chu (V in additional pieces)                        | 89    |
| <u>DEUXIÈME PARTIE</u>  |       | VIII. Yihyu leratson<br>Yihyu leratson  | 34/35 |
| III. Prière et réponse<br>Prayer and response   | 28    |   |       |
| IX. Prière silencieuse et, Yihyu leratson<br>Silent prayer and Yihyu leratson                               | 34    |   |       |
| <u>TROISIÈME PARTIE</u>   |       |   |       |
| Sortie de la Loi (Torah Service)  |       |   |       |
| X. Seu shearim<br>Seu sheorim   | 37    |   |       |
| XI. On sort les rouleaux de l'Arche<br>Taking the scroll from the Ark                                       | 41    |   |       |
| XII. Rentrée de la Loi<br>Returning the scroll to the Ark   | 48    |   |       |
| XIII. La Loi du Seigneur est parfaite<br>The law of the Lord is perfect                                     | 54    |   |       |
| XIV. Ets Hayim<br>Ets Chayim  | 55    |   |       |
| <u>QUATRIÈME PARTIE</u>   |       |   |       |
| XV. Adoration   | 57    | IX. Adoration   | 57    |
| XVI. Vaana'hnu<br>Vaanachnu   | 58    | X. Vaana'hnu<br>Vaanachnu   | 58    |
| XVII. Puisse-t-il être proche, O Seigneur...<br>May the time not be distant, O God ..<br>(Universal prayer) | 60    | XI. Puisse-t-il être proche, O Seigneur...<br>May the time not be distant, O God...<br>(Universal prayer) | 60    |
| XVIII. Kaddish (récit)  | 62    | XII. Kaddish (récit)  | 62    |
| XVIII. Kaddish (chanté)   | 64    | XII. Kaddish (chanté)   | 64    |
| XIX. Adon Olam<br>Adon Olom   | 67    | XIII. Adon Olam<br>Adon Olom  | 67    |
| XX. Bénédiction (Yevarekhecho)<br>(Yevorechecho)  | 73    | XIX. Bénédiction (Yevarekhecho)<br>(Yevorechecho)   | 73    |

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

Figure 2. Table of Contents from Milhaud's *Sacred Service*.<sup>47</sup>

In Milhaud's evening service, "Lekha dodi" replaced "Ma Tovv." "Lekha dodi" is a piece for choir and cantor in Hebrew that welcomes the coming of the Sabbath:

<sup>47</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Table of contents. There are several misprints in the table of contents. In the morning service table, Roman numerals VII and VIII are inverted, and the Sephardic title of movement 10, "Seu shearim," is misspelled. Also, in the evening service table, "Bénédiction" should be numbered as XIV.

“Beloved, come—let us approach the Sabbath bride and welcome the entrance of our Sabbath, the bride.”<sup>48</sup> Milhaud included a separate “Mi Khamokha” in the pieces for Friday evening because there are minor changes in its text for the evening service.<sup>49</sup> The music for Milhaud’s evening “Mi Khamokha” is essentially the same as the morning version, with a few alterations and additions for the differences in the cantor’s text.

“Veshameru” and “Elohenu” both have Hebrew texts that speak about the Jewish people preserving the Sabbath throughout generations.<sup>50</sup> Milhaud set the former for cantor and choir and the later for solo cantor. “Yisme’hu” is a choral movement in Hebrew that begins, “They who keep the Sabbath and call it a delight, rejoice in Thy kingdom.”<sup>51</sup>

Along with “Ma Tovv,” the following movements from the morning service are not a part of the evening service: “Tsur Yisrael,” “Praised Be Thou, O Lord,” “Kedusah,” “Prayer and response,” and the Torah Service. The absence of the Torah Service from Sabbath evening follows the practice of traditional synagogues that only read the Torah on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 14.

<sup>49</sup> *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 42 and 122-124.

<sup>50</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 14.

<sup>51</sup> *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*, 32.

<sup>52</sup> Einstein et al., *Introduction to Judaism*, 207.

## CHAPTER IV

### A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE *SACRED SERVICE*

This chapter demonstrates the many aspects of the service's musical style, including form, melody, harmony, texture, and timbre. The *Sacred Service* score is available in 2 versions, one with organ and the other with orchestra. In the interest of space, all but one of the musical examples in this chapter are from the score for choir and organ. However, the text will identify instruments from the full score as necessary.

#### **Form**

The order of the Jewish liturgy from the *Union Prayerbook* provided Milhaud with the overarching formal design of his *Sacred Service*. Although the majority of the individual movements are through-composed, Milhaud created order within the movements through the use of small-scale formal structures. There are 2 notable types of forms, and the first concerns the relationship between the cantor and the choir. Milhaud often used call and response form between the cantor and choir, similar to the interaction between the cantor and congregation in the *Union Prayerbook*. One example occurs in "Barekhu and Shema," which consists of 3 different call and response pairs. Also, in "Kedushah," the choir's joyful response of "Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh..." (Holy, Holy, Holy...) to the call of the cantor mimics the

pattern used in an actual worship service. Another example is in the final movement, “Bénédiction,” where the choir responds “Amen” to 3 different calls from the cantor. Figure 3 shows the end of the first call and the choir’s response in mm. 170-171.

74

165 170

- er A - donay - pa - nav e - le - kha, v'yi - 'hu - ne - ka  
- eir A - do - noy - po - nov ei - le - cho, v'yi - chu - ne - ko

S. A - men A - men  
O - men O - men

C. A - men A - men  
O - men O - men

T. A - men A - men  
O - men O - men

B. A - men A - men  
O - men O - men

- Tirasse I.

pp

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 3. “Bénédiction,” mm. 165-171.<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 74.

The second notable aspect of formal design in the service is the large amount of imitation present. Milhaud's use of historic forms, such as canon and fugue, gives structure to the work and adds to the neoclassic style of the composition. The choral parts of "Mi Khamokha" include 2 classic examples of a strict canon. In mm. 191-195 and mm. 198-206, the women's voices present a unison melody that the men echo, creating a canon at the octave (Fig. 4).<sup>2</sup>

The image displays a musical score for a choral work, specifically a canon at the octave. The score is written for four vocal parts: Soprano (S.), Alto (C.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The score begins at measure 190, indicated by a box containing the number 190. The lyrics are in French: "Mi kha - mo - kha ba - e - lim a-do.nay" and "Mi cho - mo - cho bo - e - lin a-do.noy". The women's voices (S. and C.) present a unison melody, which the men's voices (T. and B.) echo at the octave. The piano accompaniment is shown below the vocal parts, featuring a complex, rhythmic pattern. The score is labeled "E.A.S. 15270" at the bottom.

<sup>2</sup> There is a brief moment in both canons where the melody is not imitated exactly in consideration of the range of the bass voice; see mm. 194 and 199.

195

S.   
 C.   
 T.   
 B.

lim a-do-nay   
 lim a-do-noy

I. } + Anches   
 II. }

200

S.   
 C.   
 T.   
 B.

Mi ka - mo - kha ne-e - dar ba - ko - desh, no - ra te-hiloth   
 Mi ko - mo - cho ne-e - dor ba - ko - desh, no - ro se-Ai-lus

I. } - Anches 8.4   
 II. }

*f*

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 4. "Mi Khamokha," mm. 189-202.<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>3</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 12-13.

There are also 2 canons present in “Taking the scroll from the Ark,” and the first of these is again a canon at the octave. The women present a melody in thirds that the men echo (Fig. 5). This is a strict canon with the exception of 4 pitches in the bass voice that do not strictly echo the alto line.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 5. “Taking the scroll from the Ark,” mm. 91-100.<sup>4</sup>**

The second is a free canon at seventh on the text “Shema Yisrael.” Milhaud altered the final notes in the men’s voices so that their phrase ends in octaves with the women in m. 163. This is likely an instance of text painting, where Milhaud used

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 42.



the canon at the seventh becoming unison to represent the final line of the Shema, “the Lord is one” (Fig. 6).<sup>5</sup>

The musical score is for a piece titled "Taking the scroll from the Ark," spanning measures 152 to 167. It is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes measure numbers 155, 160, and 165. The lyrics are in Hebrew and Latin. The piano part includes a section labeled "I Fonds 8, 4" and "II." The score is published by Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.  
**Figure 6. “Taking the scroll from the Ark,” mm. 152-167.<sup>6</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> Another canon in movement 1 at m. 55 contains a misprint. The initial B-natural in the bass voice should be a D-natural, as in the tenor.

<sup>6</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 45.

Two fugal movements stand out among the work's otherwise through-composed movements. "Praised Be Thou, O Lord" is a recited prayer with orchestral accompaniment and is in the form of a 4-voice fugue. In Virgil Thompson's review of the *Sacred Service*, he pointed out that complex musical forms, such as fugue, are not the wisest choice for accompanying a narrator's lines because they detract from the text. However, since this text is a part of the Jewish ritual that "all the faithful know," Thompson concluded that the fugue actually enhances the beauty and meaning of the text.<sup>7</sup>

"Returning the scroll to the Ark" contains a 4-voice choral fugato with complete statements of the subject in each voice and 2 counter-subjects. Following convention, Milhaud placed the subjects in the tonic key and the answers in the dominant. The movement consists of a complete fugal exposition and a brief coda after the forth statement of the subject. Milhaud derived the subject of this fugue from the aforementioned fugue subject in "Praised Be Thou, O Lord."

The orchestral accompaniment of "Returning the scroll to the Ark" contains an augmented version of the fugue subject in the bassoon, French horn, trombone, and low strings, along with running eighth and sixteenth notes patterns in the woodwinds, harp, and upper strings. In Figure 7, the subject is in the alto voice, and counter-subjects 1 and 2 are in the tenor and bass, respectively. Also, the organ pedal contains the augmented version of the subject at the fifth.

---

<sup>7</sup> Virgil Thompson, "Current Chronicle: San Francisco," *Musical Quarterly* 36 (January 1950): 99-100.

245

Soprano: Ho do al e - rets ve-sha ma - yim va ya rem ke ren le a mo — Te hi

Alto: Ho - do al e - retz ve-sho - ma - yim, va-yo - rem ke - ren le-a mo — Te - hi -

Tenor: Ha-le-lu - ya, Ha - le-lu-ya, Ha - le - lu-ya, Ha - le - lu - ya, Ha-le - lu - ya, Ha-le-lu -

Bass: - ya, Ha - le - lu - ya, Ha - le - lu - ya, Ha-le-lu - ya, - yoh, Ha - le - lu - yoh, Ha - le - lu - yoh, Ha - le - lu - yoh, Ha-le-lu - yoh,

Piano: (Complex rhythmic accompaniment)

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 7. "Returning the scroll to the Ark," mm. 243-247.<sup>8</sup>**

Milhaud's use of formal devices such as call and response, canon, and fugue gives organization to the service. The call and response between the cantor and choir is true to the design of an actual Jewish service. The imitative devices of canon and fugue aid in providing compositional order within movements and add to the neoclassic style of the composition.

<sup>8</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 51.

## Melody

In the *Sacred Service*, Milhaud used 2 primary styles of melodic writing: simple, diatonic melodies and melodies in the style of cantorial chant. The diatonic melodic writing is another example of the pervasive neoclassical influence in the work and includes melodies based on major and minor scales and the church modes. The melodies in the style of cantorial chant add to the Jewish flavor of the work and are reminiscent of what a cantor sings in an actual synagogue service.

Major scales, derived from E-flat and C tonal centers, are the basis of the diatonic melodies of the 2 canons in “Mi Khamokha” (Fig. 4). They have opposite contours, the first ascending and the second descending, and are primarily conjunct. To balance the phrases, the second canon modulates back to E-flat in m. 201. Scales also provide the harmonic foundation for the accompaniment to these canons (see mm. 191-197 and mm. 201-202), which the next section on harmony further discusses.

Another example of a diatonic melody is the fugue subject from “Returning the scroll to the Ark” (Fig. 7). The tonal center is D, and the presence of a C-natural gives the tune a mixolydian modal color. It is simple and folk-like, and, although disjunct, the tune is memorable and easily recognizable. The animated tempo in cut-time complements the joyous spirit of the Hebrew text, which is translated as, “His glory is in the earth and in the heavens. He is the strength of all His servants, the

praise of them that truly love Him, the hope of Israel, the people He brought high to Himself. Hallelujah.”<sup>9</sup>

“Kedushah” begins with a fast, dance-like orchestral introduction also in mixolydian mode. When the introduction cadences, the cantor enters and sings 4 a cappella phrases, each answered by the orchestra; Figure 8 shows the first 2. The cantor’s melody stays in mixolydian mode, and his first 2 phrases are largely conjunct. By setting the melody in a simple style without accompaniment, Milhaud highlighted the Hebrew text. The cantor states, “We will proclaim Your holiness in this world as is done before You in the highest heavens; as Your prophets have written: and they [the angels] called to one another...”<sup>10</sup> The choir responds with the angels’ text (“Holy, Holy, Holy...”). Milhaud’s music here sounds as if it is accompanying the dance of the angels in heaven. The tuneful melody in a fast triple meter is fitting for the joyful character of the text.

---

<sup>9</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 12.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 11.

CANTOR

310

315

Ne-ka - desh ethshim - kha ba-o - lam, ke -  
 Ne-ka - desh esshim - cho bo-o - lom, ke -

- Tirasses I. II.

320

- shem shemak-di-shim o - to bi-she- me ma - rom  
 - shem she-mak-di-shim o - so bi-she- mei mo - rom

+ Tirasses I. II.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 8. "Kedushah," mm. 309-322.<sup>11</sup>**

Melody is also an important element of the instrumental music that accompanies the service's spoken prayers. Part 2 begins with a movement titled "Prayer and response," which includes a diatonic, hymn-like tune in the orchestral accompaniment. Different instruments play the tune 4 separate times in 3 different keys: trumpet in F major, bassoon in D major, French horn in G major, and oboe and trumpet in F major. For the final statement, the oboe and trumpet play the tune in a strict canon at the octave.

<sup>11</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 20. The D-sharp in m. 309 is a misprint. It should be a D major chord.

“Adon Olam,” the penultimate movement of the service, contains yet another example of a diatonic melody (Fig. 9). The movement is in the form of ABABA', and the melody of the A section is a conjunct tune in F major that consists of 2 4-measure phrases. The soprano and tenor sing the melody in unison and are accompanied by a countermelody in the alto and bass. The choral parts never move away from F major. However, the orchestral accompaniment is polytonal and includes a bass line built on a pentatonic scale (D-flat, E-flat, F-sharp, A-flat, and B-flat). As is common in neoclassicism, Milhaud was able to combine the old with the new by combining this simple melody with a polytonal accompaniment.

**Modérément animé** *mf* [105]

SOPRANO  
CONTRALTO  
TÉNOR  
BASSE

A - don - o - lam a - sher - ma - lakh, Be -  
A - don - o - lom a - sher - mo - lach, Be -  
A - don o - lam asher malakh,  
A - don o - lom a - sher molach,  
A - don - o - lam a - sher - ma - lakh, Be -  
A - don - o - lom a - sher - mo - lach, Be -

I. } Fonds 8, 4  
II. } petites mixtures  
III. }

Pédale Fonds 16, 8  
accouplements  
Tirasse

**Modérément animé**

S. *mf* [110]  
C.  
T.  
B.

-te.rem kol yet\_sir ni - vra Le - et na - a - ssa Ve 'hef - tso - kol, A - zay  
-te.rem kol yet\_zir ni - vro; Le - es - na - a - soh Ve chef - tzo - kol, A - zay  
Be - te.rem kol yet\_sir ni\_vra Le - et na\_a\_ssa Ve'hef\_tso kol  
Be - te.rem kol yet\_zir ni\_vro; Le - es naa\_soh Ve.chef\_tzo kol,  
-te.rem kol yet\_sir ni - vra Le - et na - a - ssa Ve 'hef - tso - kol, A - zay  
-te.rem kol yet\_zir ni - vro; Le - es - na - a - soh Ve chef - tzo - kol, A - zay  
Be - te.rem kol yet\_sir ni\_vra Le - et na\_a\_ssa Ve'hef\_tso kol,  
Be - te.rem kol yet\_zir ni\_vro; Le - es na.a.soh Ve.chef\_tzo kol,

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 9. "Adon Olam," mm. 103-110.<sup>12</sup>**

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 67.



Not all of the melodies in the *Sacred Service* fall into the neoclassical category. Milhaud paid homage to the tradition of cantorial chanting in several movements. The cantor's melody in "Veahavta" is syllabic. Milhaud set the rhythm according to the prosody of the text and the resulting melody is somewhat speech-like.<sup>13</sup> The text of this section, which begins "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your might," is from the verses following the Shema in Deuteronomy.<sup>14</sup>

Milhaud set "Tsur Yisrael" for cantor and orchestra in "pseudo-cantillation style."<sup>15</sup> Cantillation is the chanting of Hebrew by a cantor in the Jewish synagogue service. Cantors chant without accompaniment, and their phrases can contain fast melismatic movement. To imitate this style, Milhaud set much of the cantor's part in this movement a cappella, only using a sparse accompaniment of low strings. He also included several melismatic phrases. The brief introduction and the cantor's phrase in mm. 233-235 include all 12 chromatic pitches (Fig. 10).

---

<sup>13</sup> Oreen Innez Zeitlin, "Darius Milhaud's *Service Sacré*" (master's thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1992), 82-83.

<sup>14</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 11.

<sup>15</sup> Zeitlin, "Darius Milhaud's *Service Sacré*," 86.

230  
Lent (♩ = 63)

CANTOR

Tsur yis.ra -  
Tsur yis.ro -

III. Dulciane 8  
pp

Pédale Soubasse 16  
(sans Tirasse)

235

- el, ku\_ma be\_ezrath yis.ra\_el  
- el, ku\_mo be\_ezras yis.ro -el.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 10. "Tsur Yisrael," mm. 230-236.<sup>16</sup>**

Milhaud's compositional emphasis on melody is apparent throughout the *Sacred Service*. His 2 primary styles of melodic writing, diatonic melodies based on scales and speech-like cantorial chant, work together to further his stylistic goals. The simple, diatonic melodies contribute to the neat and orderly neoclassical style of the composition and the cantorial chant brings a fitting Jewish character to the work.

<sup>16</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 16.

## Harmony

Although Milhaud's primary compositional focus was melody, harmony plays a significant role in the *Sacred Service*. Milhaud used harmony as an additional means of unifying his service. The most important harmonic features that provide this unity are the repetition of tonal centers, the frequent use of open fifths in cadential figures and within movements, diatonic and chromatic scales, and the controlled use of dissonance.

Milhaud did not use key signatures in the service.<sup>17</sup> Instead, he used accidentals to allow him to freely move in and out of tonal areas. Despite the absence of key signatures, Milhaud used tonal centers to unify the work. For example, the first movement, "Ma Tovv," begins with an E-flat major chord (fifth omitted) in the orchestra (Fig. 11). This chord returns with the same spelling 4 times in the movement and serves as a tonal anchor. Milhaud gave the chord a recognizable timbre by his choice of instruments and used the same instrumentation for each repetition: bassoon, French horn, strings, and bass drum.

---

<sup>17</sup> Zeitlin, "Darius Milhaud's *Service Sacré*," 70.



© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 11. "Ma Tovv," mm. 1-16.<sup>18</sup>**

Later in the movement, the music moves out of E-flat major into several different tonal areas. The cantor's opening solo in m. 30 is in G major, a distant key from E-flat. However, Milhaud prepared this change of key with an E minor chord voiced identically to the opening chord of the movement.

In the final movement, "Bénédiction," the orchestra plays the same E-flat major chord (with identical instrumentation) a total of 8 times, and the service ends on the same chord on which it began. There is, however, one addition: the choir joins the orchestra for the last 9 measures of the movement and adds the missing fifth scale degree in the final cadence (Fig. 12). Milhaud bookended his service in the tonal center of E-flat and established this tonal center through repetition.

<sup>18</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 1.



Milhaud also used fifths frequently within movements. The orchestral introduction to the cantor's solo in "Barekhu and Shema" concludes on an open fifth between the flute and bassoon. This hollow interval increases the chant-like quality of the cantor's melody. Also, the 10 measure soprano and alto duet in Figure 13 contains 7 open fifths that stand out among the other dissonant intervals.

Version en Hébreu  
SOPRANO  
CONTRALTO  
Version en Français et Anglais  
SOPRANO  
CONTRALTO  
II. Dulciane 8  
Pédale Bourdon 8

65 *p* Bu - yom ha hu yih' - ye a - do. nay e - 'had u - she - mo e - 'had  
Ba - yom ha hu yih' - yeh a - do. noy e - chod u - she - mo e - chod

En ce jour mon Seigneur, mon Dieu se ra Un Et son nom se - ra Un  
On that day, the Lord shall be one. and His name shall be one.

II. *pp*  
8

Durée 30"

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 13. "Universal prayer," mm. 65-74.<sup>20</sup>**

Open fifths fill the orchestral accompaniment of "Vaan'hnu." Alternating between the woodwinds and strings, fifths provide a drone-like background to the call and response of the cantor and choir. The tempo increases halfway through the movement in m. 27, where French horns and trumpets begin to play fifths in a syncopated rhythm to accompany the choir. The movement ends abruptly on a

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 62.

fortissimo open fourth (an inverted fifth) with the addition of a tam-tam. The tam-tam, an orchestral gong, adds an Oriental color to the final cadence.

In “Mi Khamokha,” Milhaud repeats a motive of 3 parallel fifths throughout. First heard in m. 182, this figure also adds an Oriental quality to the music (Fig. 14). Although the movement begins in E-flat, the first and second fifths in this motive (E and B; and G and D) foreshadow of the coming cantor solo in G major. This E-flat and G major juxtaposition mirrors the harmonic structure of the first movement. Parallel fifths not only appear in this motive but throughout the accompaniment as a whole.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 14. “Mi Khamokha,” mm. 180-188.<sup>21</sup>**

Milhaud’s repeated use of the mixolydian mode gives additional unity to his service. “Mi Khamokha” opens with an E-flat mixolydian scale superimposed on an E-flat major scale (Fig. 14). This mode also plays a significant roll in movements 7,

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 12. Incidentally, m. 183 is a quote from Bach’s cantata, *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*.

12, and 20 (Figures 8, 7, 12, respectively). Milhaud's inclusion of church modes and open fifths adds a medieval character reminiscent of chant to the music and compliments its neoclassical style.

In "Mi Khamokha," there are few measures where some form of a scale is not present. Milhaud also used scales in many other movements to provide a harmonic foundation, and the orchestral introduction to the first movement foreshadows this (Fig. 11). The bass line in mm. 1-3 includes the first half of an E-flat major scale with the second scale degree omitted. In m. 10-14, the scale is completed and concludes with a 5-note chromatic scale in mm. 14-15.

Both diatonic and chromatic scales play a significant role in the harmony of the service, and there are many additional instances in this chapter's previous musical examples. In "Returning the scroll to the Ark," diatonic scales make up a large part of the orchestral material (Fig. 7). In "Tsur Yisrael," chromatic scales in the low strings accompany the cantor's solo (Fig. 10). Also, in "Universal prayer," a chromatic scale in the alto voice and viola creates dissonant harmonic color when paired with the soprano melody and a pedal note in the cello (Fig. 13).

Two final examples also show the importance of scales in the harmony of Milhaud's service. In Figure 15, a chromatic scale provides the underlying harmony for an a cappella choral phrase that ends movement 8, "Prayer and response." The bass voice descends chromatically from tonic to dominant, accompanying yet another diatonic canon between the tenor and women's voices.



80 85

S. Sei - gneur, notre Père, entends nos pri - è - res et bé - nis - nous.  
Our Fa - ther in Hea - ven, hear our pra - yer and bless us.

C. Sei - gneur, notre Père, entends nos pri - è - res et bé - nis - nous.  
Our Fa - ther in Hea - ven, hear our pra - yer and bless us.

T. Sei - gneur, notre Père, entends nos pri - è - res et bé - nis - nous.  
Our Fa - ther in Hea - ven, hear our pra - yer and bless us.

B. Sei - gneur, no - tre Père.  
Our Fa - ther in Hea - ven.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

Durée 5'30

**Figure 15. "Prayer and response," mm. 80-87.<sup>22</sup>**

In Figure 16, a D major scale in the bassoons and low strings accompanies a homophonic choral statement from "Kedushah." Later in the movement, a C major scale accompanies a similar homophonic phrase. Both of these phrases are also examples of polytonality. The former juxtaposes a D major scale against the choir's forte proclamation of "Holy, Holy, Holy" on an A major chord. The latter is transposed down a whole step, and the choir sings G major chords on top of a C major scale.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 33.

340 345

S. *ff* Ka - dosh, Ka - dosh, Ka - dosh, a - do - nay lse - va -  
 Ko - dosh, Ko - dosh, Ko - dosh, a - do - noy tze - vo -

C. *ff*

T. *ff* Ka - dosh, Ka - dosh, Ka - dosh, a - do - nay lse - va -  
 Ko - dosh, Ko - dosh, Ko - dosh, a - do - noy tze - vo -

B. *ff*

Piano: I. *ff* + Tirasse I.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 16. "Kedushah," mm. 338-346.<sup>23</sup>**

There are other examples of polytonality in the service. Although the work is grounded in tonality, Milhaud used this technique to add harmonic interest. The resulting dissonance is never jarring but adds richness to the harmony. This controlled use of dissonance is the final aspect of Milhaud's harmonic vocabulary that merits discussion.

The polychords that occur in the final 4 measures of "Kedushah" are another instance of polytonality (Fig. 17). The voices combine to create several pairs of chords: C major with G major, B minor with A minor, B minor with C major, and A minor with B minor. The soprano voice moves in contrary motion with the tenor

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 21.

and bass by step. They ultimately cadence on a G major chord, bringing closure to part 1 of the service.

The musical score for 'Kedushah' (mm. 450-458) is presented in a standard musical notation format. It includes four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are written in a single system, with the lyrics 'ha - le - lu - ya ha - le - lu - ya' and 'ha - le - lu - ya' in Hebrew. The piano accompaniment is written in a single system, with a 'Tutti' section marked 'ff' (fortissimo). The score is in G major and 4/4 time.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 17. "Kedushah," mm. 450-458.<sup>24</sup>**

Milhaud also included 2 chords with both major and minor thirds. In m. 64 of "Universal prayer" and m. 102 of "Kaddish," soft strings play D major/minor and E major/minor chords, respectively. While both of these chords occur in cadences, this type of dissonance is actually rare in the final cadences of movements. Dissonance usually occurs within movements because of Milhaud's linear (melodic) rather than vertical (harmonic) focus. However, he was careful to bring resolution

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 27.

through consonant cadential figures at the end of movements. Thompson also mentioned Milhaud's adeptly crafted cadences: "Notably skilful and bold also are the cadential solutions. The work presents a huge variety of disarmingly ingenious movements out of some complex harmonic situation into a perfect chord."<sup>25</sup>

As noted above, 7 of the works 21 movements end on an open fifth. Other final cadences include an open fourth, an octave or unison, a major or minor chord, or a seventh chord. A cadence within "Prayer and response" demonstrates Milhaud's skill and creativity. Similar to the major/minor polychords, there is an abrupt change from minor to major in mm. 41-42 (Fig. 18). This may be a neoclassical homage to the Baroque Picardy third. Milhaud's version, however, sounds far more modern since his final major chord is not preceded by the dominant.

The image shows a musical score for two voices, Soprano (S.) and Contralto (C.), from measures 35 to 42. The music is in 4/4 time. The key signature changes from one flat (B-flat) to one sharp (F-sharp) between measures 41 and 42, illustrating the transition from minor to major. The lyrics are in French and English. The French lyrics are: "Que nos pri - è - res, ô Pè - re, te soient a - gré - a - bles." The English lyrics are: "May it please Thee, O Fa - ther, to hear our pra - yer." The score includes dynamic markings like *mp* and *pp*.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 18. "Prayer and response," mm. 35-42.<sup>26</sup>**

Through the repetition of tonal centers, the frequent use of open fifths in cadential figures and within movements, diatonic and chromatic scales, and the

<sup>25</sup> Thompson, "Current Chronicle: San Francisco," 100.

<sup>26</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 30. The other cadence occurs in mm. 64-65.

controlled use of dissonance, Milhaud harmonically unified his *Sacred Service*. These harmonic devices serve to further the work's neoclassical style and aided Milhaud in coalescing the work's many movements into a cohesive whole.

### **Texture and Timbre**

Milhaud's manipulation of textures and timbres provide additional variety in the *Sacred Service*. Concerning the choral parts, this chapter's previous musical examples have sufficiently shown the contrast of polyphonic and homophonic textures. However, there are a few additional techniques that Milhaud used to vary the choral texture that deserve attention.

Milhaud did not use all 4 voice parts for every choral statement. He varied the texture by including sections for women or men only. The work opens with a unison phrase in the men's voices (Fig. 19). Also, movement 14, "Ets 'Hayim," is for cantor and 4-part men's chorus (Fig. 20). Even the texture of these 2 examples contrast. The former has a thin, chant-like melody and is accompanied by the woodwinds and strings. The latter is texturally dense and unaccompanied.

TÉNOR

Ma to - vu o - ha - le - kha ya - a - kov mish - ke - no - te - kha yis - ra - el

BASSE

Ma to - vu o - ho - le - cho ya - a - kov mish - ke - no - se - cho yis - ro - el

20

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 19. "Ma Tovu," mm. 17-24.<sup>27</sup>**

TÉNOR

Ets'ha - yim - hi la - ma - ha - zi - kim ba, ve - to - me -

BASSE

Ets'ha - yim - hi la - ma - cha - zi - kim boh, ve - so - me -

295

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 20. "Ets 'Hayim," mm. 294-297.<sup>28</sup>**

Both "Universal prayer" (Fig. 13) and "Prayer and response" (Fig. 18) include phrases for women's voices only. Like the above men's phrases, these examples contrast in texture. The former has a thin, 2-part texture and is accompanied by solo strings. The latter has a thicker, 4-part texture and is unaccompanied.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 55.

There is also a brief moment (9 measures) in the final movement of part 2, “Silent prayer and Yihyu leratson,” where Milhaud called for a solo SATB quartet from within the choir (Fig. 21). The quartet’s lines are unaccompanied and polyphonic but not imitative. This subdued ending is fitting for the intimate prayer from Psalm 19:14 (“May the words of my mouth...”). It also contrasts sharply with the orchestral fanfare that begins part 3.

The image displays a musical score for a solo SATB quartet. It is divided into two systems, each with four staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass). The first system is in Hebrew, and the second system is in English. Each staff is marked 'SOLO' at the beginning. The music is polyphonic, with each voice part having its own melodic line. The lyrics are printed below the staves, with some words in italics. The score is for measures 100-103.

**Version en hébreu**

S. Yih - yu le - ra - tson im - re fi ve - heg - yon li - bi le, fa -  
 Yih - yu le - ro - tson im - rei fi, ve - heg - yon li - bi - le fo -

A. Yih - yu le - ra - tson im - re fi ve - heg - yon li -  
 Yih - yu le - ro - tson im - rei fi, ve - heg - yon li -

T. Yih - yu le - ra - tson im - re fi ve - heg - yon li -  
 Yih - yu le - ro - tson im - rei fi, ve - heg - yon li -

B. Yih - yu le - ra - tson im - re fi ve - heg - yon li -  
 Yih - yu le - ro - tson im - rei fi, ve - heg - yon li -

**Version en Français et Anglais**

S. Que les mots qui sor - tent de ma bou - che et les mé - di - ta - tions de mon  
 May the words of my mouth and the me - di - ta - tions of my

A. Que les mots qui sor - tent de ma bou - che et les mé - di - ta - tions de mon  
 May the words of my mouth and the me - di - ta - tions of my

T. Que les mots de ma bou - che et les mé - di - ta - tions de mon  
 May the words of my mouth and the me - di - ta - tions of my

B. Que les mots de ma bou - che et les mé - di - ta - tions de mon  
 May the words of my mouth and the me - di - ta - tions of my

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 21. “Silent prayer and Yihyu leratson,” mm. 100-103.<sup>29</sup>**

<sup>29</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, 35. This quartet may be performed in Hebrew, French, or English.

Milhaud included 2 versions of movement 18, “Kaddish,” in the service; one is recited and the other is sung. In the spoken version, Milhaud achieved a new choral timbre by asking the choir to murmur one of the Hebrew phrases, which is translated, “May His great Name be praised forever, for all time, for all eternity.”<sup>30</sup> Milhaud indicated no pitches or rhythms for the choir in the score.

Milhaud also incorporated textural variety within the orchestral accompaniment by contrasting tutti passages with solo instrumental lines reminiscent of the Baroque concerted style. One of the most striking examples of this throughout the work is the contrast between the full strings and a solo string ensemble. Figure 22 is an excerpt of “Ma Tovv” from the full score that shows the texture thin from tutti orchestra in mm. 7-8 to solo strings in mm. 9, 11, and 12. Figure 11, an excerpt of the same movement from the score for choir and organ, shows how Milhaud incorporated the same tutti/solo alternation in the organ registration.

---

<sup>30</sup> Milhaud, *Service Sacré*, Naxos 8.559409, 2003, 13.



The image displays two systems of a musical score for 'Ma Tovv', measures 7-14. The first system includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Horn in B-flat (Htb.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bs.), Cor Anglais (Cors.), Trumpet (Trp.), Trombone (Trb.), and Cymbals (G.C.). The second system includes staves for Violin I (I.), Violin II (II.), Alto (Alt.), Viola (Vc.), and Cello/Double Bass (Cb.). The score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The woodwinds and strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, often marked with 'f' (forte) and 'p' (piano). The brass instruments have rests in the first system and enter in the second system. The Cb. part includes the instruction 'Arco' and 'les autr.' (the others). The second system also includes the instruction 'Tous unis' (all together) for the strings.

© Editions Salabert/Universal Music Publishing Classical. Used by permission.

**Figure 22. "Ma Tovv," mm. 7-14.<sup>31</sup>**

<sup>31</sup> Darius Milhaud, *Service Sacré pour le samedi matin* (full score), (Paris: Éditions Salabert, 1950), 2.

Milhaud created additional orchestral color through the incorporation of multiple percussion instruments. For example, the final section of “Kedushah” includes 6 choral statements of “Haleluya” in a fast, dance-like character. For this festive finale of part 1, Milhaud used full orchestral accompaniment with 8 percussion instruments: timpani, bass drum, snare drum, tambourine, slapstick, cymbals, tam-tam, and castanets. Other instrumental techniques that add variety to the work’s timbre are pizzicati and flute and trumpet flutter-tonguing.

Milhaud used a myriad of compositional techniques to add interest, variety, and meaning to his *Sacred Service*. From the work’s overarching form provided by the order of the Jewish liturgy to the devices of call and response, canon, and fugue, Milhaud created an ordered structure for the composition. These forms, along with the diatonic and chant-like melodic writing, contribute to both the Jewish and neoclassical character of the work.

Milhaud furthered the service’s neoclassical style by his treatment of harmony and texture. The neoclassical harmonic elements include the repetition of tonal centers, consonant cadential figures, the frequent use of open fifths and mixolydian mode, diatonic and chromatic scales, and controlled dissonance. The orchestra’s alternation between tutti and solo passages also helped to establish the neoclassical style.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

When one thinks of Darius Milhaud, his instrumental works most often come to mind. His use of jazz in *La Création du monde* (1923) and Brazilian dance forms in *Le Boeuf sur le toit* (1919) and *Scaramouche* (1937) have gained much notoriety. The general appeal of such pieces is likely due to their incorporation of popular styles. Milhaud's *Sacred Service* stands in sharp contrast to these familiar instrumental works; it is a relatively unknown work in the standard western canon of choral literature. Three probable reasons for this lack of knowledge are the absence of scholarly inquiry into the choral music of Milhaud, unfamiliarity with the Jewish liturgy, and unfamiliarity with the Hebrew language. The purpose of this document has been to provide a greater understanding of it through a historical, textual, and theoretical analysis.

To fully understand the *Sacred Service*, one must look back to Milhaud's Jewish heritage. Judaism was important to him throughout his life and provided inspiration for many of his compositions. Milhaud's Provençal Jewish roots inspired the story and setting for his opera *Esther de Carpentras*, and the Holocaust inspired his cantatas *Le Château du feu* and *Ani maamin*. The *Sacred Service* stands out among Milhaud's Jewish works as his only setting of the complete Sabbath Morning Service and 1 of only 2 settings of the service by an internationally known composer.

The *Sacred Service* displays several aspects of Milhaud's musical style, including an emphasis on melody, neoclassical design, and polytonal harmony. In his autobiography, he revealed the origins of these stylistic elements. During his study at the Paris Conservatory from 1909-1915, Gédalge taught Milhaud to put melody at the center of his music. In the 1920s, Milhaud's association with Cocteau and Les Six contributed to his turn from the excesses of late romanticism to the clarity of neoclassicism. Regarding polytonality, Milhaud noted the influence of the music of Bach.

These stylistic traits are not only present in the *Sacred Service* but are also a part of Milhaud's music as a whole. Indeed, his instrumental compositions have drawn the attention of many musicians because of their incorporation of these stylistic traits. Though the *Sacred Service* displays the same inventive style, it has not received the same notoriety. This document's analysis of the service shows it to be a significant choral work equally worthy of recognition.

Milhaud wrote the *Sacred Service* in 1947, just after World War II. The Nazi occupation of France forced Milhaud, a prominent Jewish artist, to flee to the U. S. with his family to escape the Holocaust. Fortunately, San Francisco warmly welcomed Milhaud and not only provided him safety from the war but also a college teaching position. At the time Milhaud arrived in San Francisco, Reuben Rinder was working to increase the amount of quality music being written for the synagogue by commissioning Jewish composers of stature. Milhaud's reputation as a leading

composer of the day, his neoclassical style, and his proximity to San Francisco led Rinder to commission a Sabbath Morning Service from him.

Rinder provided Milhaud, who had only just left France because of Jewish persecution, with an opportunity to openly express his Jewish heritage. Milhaud did not shy away from this request but rather used it as an opportunity to compose his most important Jewish work. The events surrounding the commissioning of the *Sacred Service* contribute greatly to the work's meaning and historical significance and argue for its position within the western canon of choral music.

The reviewers of the premier of the *Sacred Service* criticized its lack of climax and drama. However, one must realize that Milhaud was turning away from the emotional excesses of romanticism and impressionism and view the drama of his music within a neoclassical framework. While avoiding exaggerated spectacle, the service maintains a clear balance of tempos, dynamics, and textures. Indeed, one finds a great deal of the interest of the work in its neoclassical traits.

Milhaud based the *Sacred Service* on the Reform Jewish liturgy, and an understanding of Reform practices is vital to a complete understanding of the work. Milhaud's incorporation of instrumental accompaniment, women's voices, and the vernacular are all a result of the modernization of the Reform Jewish movement. The 4 parts of Milhaud's service correspond to the 5 sections of the liturgy as outlined in the Reform prayerbook. These include a morning blessing, the Shema and its blessings, the Amidah, the Torah Service, and closing prayers.

The individual movements use Biblical and other traditional Jewish texts, and Milhaud conveyed them in a variety of ways. Using both Hebrew (the traditional language of the Jewish liturgy) and the vernacular (the language of the people), Milhaud divided the text among narrator, cantor, and choir. Several movements are simple spoken prayers over orchestral accompaniment. Others include cantor solos, a cappella choral passages, and homophonic choral declarations. In each instance, Milhaud was careful to set the text in an understandable manner appropriate to its meaning.

The *Sacred Service* is appropriate for both synagogue and concert performance because of Milhaud's close adherence to the prayerbook's order of worship. Like Milhaud, Bloch also followed the prayerbook layout in *Avodath Hakodesh*, but Bloch's continuous design makes his work less adaptable in an actual service. Each of the movements in Milhaud's service can stand alone and are easily excerpted for use in a synagogue service. He allowed for the insertion of a Torah reading and a sermon, included music to accompany the movement of the Torah scrolls, and even added movements for use in the Sabbath Evening Service. Also, Milhaud increased the work's accessibility by creating an organ reduction of the accompaniment.

Unfamiliarity with the Jewish liturgy may lead some to overlook Milhaud's *Sacred Service*. This document has explained the details of the liturgy and its texts with the hopes of inspiring others to examine the work more closely. The text is at the forefront of Milhaud's service; his incorporation of simple melodies, cantorial

chant, and narration allows listeners to easily understand the words. Also, after reading the Hebrew translation, one can see how Milhaud's music beautifully compliments the text.

To obtain a complete picture of Milhaud's service, one must not only examine the Reform Jewish liturgy but also the work's musical structure. The formal design of much of the service is neoclassical and includes many instances of imitation. Forms such as canon and fugue play a significant role in the structure of vocal and instrumental lines. Milhaud also included some formal characteristics of Jewish sacred music; the call and response structure work mirrors the dialogue between the cantor and the congregation in a Sabbath Service.

The simple and straightforward character of the service's melodies also fits well within Milhaud's neoclassical style. The melodies are largely diatonic and unadorned, similar to hymn or folk tunes. Milhaud also included some melodies for the baritone soloist in a cantorial style, with melismatic movement and speech-like rhythms. Harmonically, Milhaud maintained controlled dissonance through the use of scales, polytonality, and consonant cadential figures. In addition, he created textural variety through the contrast of tutti and solo passages, the use of multiple percussion instruments, and a variety of choral configurations.

After examining the many compositional devices Milhaud used within his *Sacred Service*, one can easily see the musical significance of the work. In 2003, the Milken Archive of Jewish Music released the first recording of Milhaud's *Sacred Service* that includes both the Friday evening and Saturday morning portions. The

recording includes Gerard Schwarz, conductor, Yaron Windmueller, baritone, Rabbi Rodney Mariner, narrator, the Prague Philharmonic Choir, and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. This recording represents a strong step forward in raising the awareness of Milhaud's choral music. There are, however, many choral works in his oeuvre that merit additional study and performance, such as the works with text by the French writer Paul Claudel (1868-1955): *Cantique du Rhône* (1936), *Cantate de la paix* (1937), *Les deux cites* (1937), *Cantate de la guerre* (1940), and *Invocation à l'ange Raphael* (1962).

Through out his life, Milhaud collaborated with Claudel on many works, including operas, ballets, and incidental music for plays. They first met in 1912, and, in his autobiography, Milhaud recalled, "Perhaps I was unconsciously unaware that this meeting would decide what my life's work was going to be!... It marked the first step not only in a faithful collaboration, but in a precious friendship too."<sup>1</sup> Claudel was a devout Catholic, and the *Grove Music Online* article on him makes note of this in light of his partnership with Milhaud:

There is some curiosity in the fact that Claudel – a northerner and an undoubting Catholic, who came increasingly to see his role as that of a Biblical exegetist and interpreter of the faith – should have been able to collaborate with the Provençal Jewish composer.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Milhaud, *Notes Without Music*, 43-44.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Griffiths and Barbara L. Kelly, "Claudel, Paul," in *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/05893> (accessed July 29, 2011).



Additional research into the friendship between Milhaud and Claudel and the resulting choral works will serve to further the understanding of Milhaud's contribution to the choral canon.

Milhaud's last choral composition, the cantata *Ani maamin, un chant perdu et retrouvé*, is another work that is worthy of additional study and performance. The Brooklyn Philharmonic premiered the work at Carnegie Hall in 1975, and Paul Méfano, a French composer, conductor, and student of Milhaud's, conducted the first and only recording in 1992.<sup>3</sup>

Works such as *Ani Maamin* and the *Sacred Service* demonstrate Milhaud's substantial contribution to choral music. This document has provided a greater understanding of the *Sacred Service* through a detailed analysis, and this author hopes that familiarity with this work, and Milhaud's choral oeuvre as a whole, will increase as a result. Scholarly inquiry into his many choral works will no doubt reveal many hidden treasures and encourage an increased appreciation for Milhaud as a composer of not only instrumental music but choral music, as well.

---

<sup>3</sup> Darius Mihaud, *Ani maamin: un chant perdu et retrouvé*, orchestra and chorus dir. Paul Méfano, Arion ARN 68275, 1992.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Central Conference of American Rabbis. *The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship*. Rev. ed. Cincinnati: The Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1941.

Chall, Malca. *Rose Rinder: Music, Prayer, and Religious Leadership, 1913-1969*. Berkeley: Judah L. Magnes Museum, 1971.

Cocteau, Jean. *A Call to Order*. Translated by Rollo Myers. New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1974.

Collaer, Paul. *Darius Milhaud*. Translated and edited by Jane Hohfeld Galante. San Francisco: San Francisco Press, 1988.

Drake, Jeremy. "Milhaud, Darius." *Grove Music Online*.  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/18674> (accessed May 16, 2011).

Einstein, Stephen J., Lydia Kukoff, Lisa Edwards, Marjorie Slome, and Hara Person, eds. *Introduction to Judaism: A Sourcebook*. Rev. ed. New York: UAHC Press, 1998.

Frankenstein, Alfred. "Bloch's 'Sacred Service' Heard First Time in S. F." *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 29, 1938.

\_\_\_\_\_. "New Work by Milhaud Performed at Emanu-El." *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 20, 1949.

Fried, Alexander. "Milhaud Leads 'Sacred Service.'" *San Francisco Examiner*, May 20, 1949.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Music Teachers Hear Debut of Milhaud Religious Music." *San Francisco Examiner*, August 19, 1949.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Reverent Audience Hails Masterpiece by Ernest Bloch." *San Francisco Examiner*, March 29, 1938.

- Griffiths, Paul. "Six, Les." *The Oxford Companion to Music*.  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e6228>  
 (accessed July 20, 2011).
- Griffiths, Paul and Barbara L. Kelly. "Clauel, Paul." *Grove Music Online*.  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/05893> (accessed July 29, 2011).
- Malloy, Michael. *Experiencing the World's Religions: Tradition, Challenge, and Change*.  
 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2010.
- Milhaud, Darius. *Ani maamin: un chant perdu et retrouvé*. Paul Méfano, orchestra and  
 chorus dir. Arion ARN 68275. CD. 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Le Château du feu*. Paris: Éditions Max Eschig, 1957.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *My Happy Life*. Translated by Donald Evans, George Hall, and Christopher  
 Palmer. New York: Marion Boyars, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Notes Without Music*. Edited by Rollo Myers. Translated by Donald Evans.  
 New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Service sacré pour le samedi matin*. Darius Milhaud, orchestra dir. and  
 Yvonne Gouverné, chorus dir. Universal Classical France 4761590. CD. 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Service Sacré pour le samedi matin*. Full score. Paris: Éditions Salabert,  
 1950.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Service Sacré pour le samedi matin*. Reduction for choir and organ. Paris:  
 Éditions Salabert, 1950.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Service Sacré*. Gerard Schwartz, orchestra and chorus dir. Naxos  
 8.559409. CD. 2003.
- Nichols, Roger. *Conversations with Madeleine Milhaud*. London: Faber and Faber,  
 1996.
- The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*. Edited by R. J. Zwi Werblowsky and  
 Geoffrey Wigoder. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Pasler, Jann. "Impressionism." *Grove Music Online*.  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/50026> (accessed July 20, 2011).

- Rinder, Reuben R., Papers, BANC MSS 2010/692, The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
- Rosenbaum, Frank. *Visions of Reform: Congregation Emanu-El and the Jews of San Francisco, 1849-1999*. Berkeley: Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2000.
- Thompson, Virgil. "Current Chronicle: San Francisco." *Musical Quarterly* 36 (January 1950): 99-105.
- U. S. Census Bureau. "The 2011 Statistical Abstract."  
<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/population/religion.html>  
 (accessed June 17, 2011).
- Walker, Robert. "Milhaud and America." *The Musical Times* 133, no. 1795 (September 1992): 443-444.
- Ward, Seth. "The Liturgy of Bloch's *Avodath Ha-Kodesh*." *Modern Judaism* 23, no. 3 (October 2003): 243-263.
- Whittall, Arnold. "Neo-classicism." *Grove Music Online*.  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/19723> (accessed July 20, 2011).
- Wiesel, Elie. *And the Sea is Never Full: Memoirs, 1969-*. Translated by Marion Wiesel. New York: Alfred A. Knoph, 1999.
- Zeitlin, Oreen Innez. "Darius Milhaud's *Service Sacré*." Master's thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1992.

APPENDIX A  
CORRESPONDENCE

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Figure A1. Letter from Darius Milhaud to Ruben Rinder,<br>December 25, 1947..... | 82   |

no hand

4 Place Jeanne d'Arc

Aix en Provence

Dec 25<sup>th</sup> 1947

Dear Dr. Pinder.

I want to send you my best season  
greetings. all together Hanouka  
Christmas. New Year !!

Our arrival in France was very  
moving. After seven years. what an  
emotion to be back in my country.  
The musical life is of an incredible activity.  
I have been appointed at the Conservatoire of  
Paris as Professor of Composition. but I have  
not yet been able to begin my work as my  
health has been awfully poor. and I have  
been two months in bed, here in Aix, with

artistic. I am a little better now and  
hope to be able very soon to resume  
my activities.  
We think very often with fondness  
about all your interest and kindness  
for myself and my music. I will  
never forget that it was thanks to  
your intervention that I had been able  
to write one of the great works of  
my life -  
Madeleine joins me to send you and  
Mrs Rinder our best greetings -  
Yours  
Darius Milhaud  
Dr 48527  
Boulogne

Figure A1. Letter from Darius Milhaud to Ruben Rinder, December 25, 1947.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Darius Milhaud to Ruben Rinder, December 25, 1947, Reuben R. Rinder Papers, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Used by permission.

## APPENDIX B

### REVIEWS

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Figure B1. Alexander Fried's review of the premier of<br>Milhaud's <i>Sacred Service</i> .....         | 84   |
| Figure B2. Alfred Frankenstein's review of the premier of<br>Milhaud's <i>Sacred Service</i> .....     | 85   |
| Figure B3. Alexander Fried's review of the premier of<br>Milhaud's <i>Friday Evening Service</i> ..... | 86   |



St. Francis.

## Milhaud Leads 'Sacred Service'

By ALEXANDER FRIED

ASIDE from its ritual significance, the concert premiere of Darius Milhaud's "Sacred Service," Wednesday night at the Temple Emanu-El, was an important musical event.

The work is typical of efforts that all creeds are making nowadays to add fine new music to the repertory of religious observance. Milhaud has taken a different track, and has run a bit of risk in doing so. His "Sacred Service" music is deepfelt and original. Its moods generally turn inward. It seems consistently determined not to be rhetorical. Instead of providing a dramatized portrait of ritual, it is the ritual itself.

A friend of the Temple commissioned Milhaud to write it. He himself conducted it, in the presence of a non-sectarian audience that filled the Temple to overflowing and, after a respectful pause, applauded him warmly.

As part of the work itself, Cantor Reuben R. Rinder spoke intermittent prayers, sometimes in Hebrew, often in English. Singers were Edgar Jones, baritone, and the University of California Chorus. A large part of the San Francisco Symphony played a distinctive and expressive supporting role.

fact it is on the whole not as large and vigorous as it might be even within its chosen spirit of modest reverence. Nevertheless it is full of touching visions and fascinating interweavings of quiet, unusual sound. In its best pages of devotion and praise to God, there is a subtle beauty that should reveal more and more inspiration on further hearing.

Most composers, when they turn to religious forms, use much the same dramatic and emotional attitude as in their serious secular works.

For example, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is hardly less religious than his "Missa Solemnis." Verdi's great "Requiem," for all its

Jones' voice was exceptionally fine. Prof. Edward Lawton's chorus sang intelligently and well. However, the overall vocal effect was not powerful enough to give the "Sacred Service" its full possibilities of emotional variety and highlight.

Figure B1. Alexander Fried's review of the premier of Milhaud's *Sacred Service*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Fried, "Milhaud Leads 'Sacred Service,'" *San Francisco Examiner*, May 20, 1949. Used by permission.

## New Work by Milhaud Performed at Emanu-El

By ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

Mysticism and classic clarity are supposed to be mutually exclusive, but they are beautifully blended in Darius Milhaud's "Sacred Service," which had its first performance Wednesday night at Temple Emanu-El, the composer conducting.

The liturgy of the synagogue has attracted relatively few composers of importance, and it might not have attracted Milhaud if Cantor Reuben Rinder of Emanu-El had not prevailed upon him to write this score. Characteristically, Milhaud employs full and festive means in his music, and the temple spared nothing to give it a first hearing under the best possible conditions.

It is extremely likely that Milhaud's service will find its way into the general choral literature, for Milhaud has given his text universal artistic significance, just as Bach universalized the Lutheran service and as countless composers have universalized the Roman Catholic mass.

Simplicity, dignity, magnificently fluent melody, and a huge palette of color that glows from the depths without lushness—these are some of the qualities of this work. The Orientalisms on which a lesser composer might have fallen back are entirely absent, but there are subtle hints of the Biblical dance before the ark, and the cool pastoral note which is so characteristic if Milhaud is not infrequently sounded.

Nevertheless, one cannot avoid noting a degree of sameness. The subject, to be sure, does not lend itself to varied treatment like that which Milhaud gave the "Te Deum" in his recently performed third symphony. At the same time, the score would be more monumental in ef-

fect if its mood and pace were not so even.

This impression might well be dispelled on a second hearing, and it could have been due to a certain degree of caution on the part of the orchestra Wednesday evening. The University of California Chorus, however, had no need for caution, and it has never sung with more beautiful tone and thorough sympathy. Edgar Jones, the baritone soloist, was likewise finely poised, completely at ease with the music, and from both the vocal and interpretative points of view gave a singularly impressive performance.

Figure B2. Alfred Frankenstein's review of the premier of Milhaud's *Sacred Service*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Frankenstein, "New Work by Milhaud Performed at Emanu-El," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 20, 1949. Used by permission.



**Figure B3. Alexander Fried's review of the premier of Milhaud's *Friday Evening Service*.<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>4</sup> Fried, "Music Teachers Hear Debut of Milhaud Religious Music," *San Francisco Examiner*, August 19, 1949. Used by permission.